POSTMODERNISMS: A PROVISIONAL HISTORY, 1914-2010

A Thesis
by
DANIEL ADAM MICHALAK

Submitted to the Graduate School
Appalachian State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
MASTER OF ARTS

August 2011
Department of History

POSTMODERNISMS: A PROVISIONAL HISTORY, 1914-2010

A Thesis
by
DANIEL ADAM MICHALAK

APPROVED BY:

_____
Michael C. Behrent
Chairperson, Thesis Committee

_____
Edward Berhend-Martinez
Member, Thesis Committee

_____
Winfield Scott Jessee
Member, Thesis Committee

_____
Lucinda M. McCray
Chairperson, Department of History

_____
Edelma D. Huntley
Dean, Research and Graduate Studies

ABSTRACT

POSTMODERNISMS: A PROVISIONAL HISTORY, 1914-2010 (August 2011)

Daniel Adam Michalak, B.A., Marietta College

M.A., Appalachian State University

Chairperson: Michael C. Behrent

The purpose of this thesis is to explore and examine the development of the postmodernism from its confused beginnings following its various false starts until its successful coalescence in the 1970s. The value of this work is that it offers a chance to reorient and perhaps reconsider the often polarizing term. At times, especially given the hyperbolic nature of the debates, postmodern has become a pejorative term used to label a wide range of thinkers often questionably grouped together. The focus of this paper is to trace the history of the word postmodern and its numerous permutations. This thesis will also demonstrate the symbiotic relationship between modernism and postmodernism. Postmodernism, as will be seen, is always a possibility of modernism. Postmodernism functions within a framework of meanings tied, in various ways, to modernism.

DEDICATION

I would like to thank my parents and family for their support throughout my education. I would also like to thank Albert Brent Lane for keeping me AMPED and FIRED UP throughout graduate school and especially the thesis writing process. Special thanks also go out to the departmental secretaries Mrs. Donna Davis and Mrs. Teanna Setzer for keeping the office supplied with paper, their savant like ability to track down obscure information at the drop of a hat, and most of all for making the history building a little more fun than it otherwise would have.

Finally, I would like to dedicate this to my thesis committee members Dr. Jessee and Dr. Berhend-Martinez and especially Dr. Behrent for serving as my committee chairperson. Without their gentle scolding this thesis would not have been nearly as thoughtful or worthwhile as it has turned out. Dr. James Goff also deserves mention, though not directly involved in my academic career at Appalachian State, without his help I would probably have never ended up in Boone.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE

"The most powerful Western conception of modernity, and the one which has had the most profound effects, asserted above all that rationalization required the destruction of so-called traditional social bonds, feelings, customs and beliefs, and that the agent of modernization was neither a particular category or social class, but reason itself and the historical necessity that was paving the way for its triumph."
Alain Touraine.[1]

Postmodernism is often seen as a notoriously difficult term to deal with.[2] Its meaning is flexible enough to encompass a series of connotations that often makes the term paradoxical if not contradictory. Moreover, the word itself is loaded to say the least. Liberal and conservative critics attack it for a variety of reasons. However, the point of this thesis is not to provide a definitive definition of the term postmodern or to defend it from its various critics. The goal is to trace the development of postmodernism from its earliest moments to its current meanings and perceptions. By looking at the history of the term of itself, the encumbrances associated with the word can be avoided or at the very least reconsidered. By tracing its history, some of the problematic inconsistencies of its varied meanings become considerably more comprehensible and understandable. "Postmodernism's" history also reveals that though the term itself lacks singular meaning, it does derive its range of meanings from a framework of built around conceptions of modernism itself. Modernism and postmodernism share a symbiotic, if not antagonistic, relationship.

---

[1] Alain Touraine, *Critique of Modernity*, trans. David Macey (Cambridge, Blackwell, 1995), 10.
[2] Given the variety of ways postmodern can be suffixed or hyphenated (post-modern, posmodernist, post-modernity), postmodern will stand for the other permutations unless it is used in a quote or the form carries specific meaning within the sentence. I do not hold that one form over another suggests either sympathy or skepticism.

Postmodernism took a variety of unusual turns in its early history that have been shed in contemporary debates and understandings of the word itself. This is both the history of a word and an idea, but it is also a cultural history. Postmodernism is an excellent indication of tensions that exist within various intellectual communities. That is not to say that it is always carefully defined, but it is an excellent indicator of anxiety in those fields that have a conception of modernism (and even a few that do not). The most succinct definition of this tension is that postmodernism is both an acceleration of modernism and an attempt to return to something previous.

Three distinct but interrelated issues are central to the narrative of postmodernism. (1) Postmodernism is in a symbiotic relationship with modernism. That is to say, postmodernism emerges in contexts where modernism in some form exists. Modernism is essentially a precondition for the rise of postmodernism— postmodernism is an inescapable corollary of modernism. Any current concept of postmodernism is tied, in one way or another, to modernism. Conversely, modernism's existence (regardless of definition) creates the potential, and necessary, condition for postmodernism. It is worth noting that postmodernism arises in cases/areas where a modernist movement is arguably non-existent (or at least undefined), but in these cases an *ad hoc* definition of modernism sufficient enough to create a related oppositional stance is demarked. At its core, modernism and postmodernism (regardless of how the terms are defined) are oppositional and concurrently enmeshed.

(2) Derived from the previous condition, postmodernism is tied to the view that modernism has gone too far or not far enough in its "program." Postmodernism is intimately and inherently tied to the perceived failures of modernism: it is either depleted or apathetic.

2

Taken to its extreme conclusion, all critiques of modernism are implicitly postmodern. In a very important sense, these appraisals tend to advocate the acceleration of one aspect (or aspects) of modernism while embracing or praising "archaic" ideas/tendencies (ideas or practices that are taken to be pre-"modern"). Put another way, postmodernism pivots around a self-conscious conception of its own historicism even if its critiques of modernism tend to undermine or outright reject the validly, meaning, and use of history itself.

(3) Consequently, even when postmodernism emerged before its moment of coalescence around 1972-4, the themes of what would become "postmodernism" were implicitly embedded within the debate. Thus, even very early uses of the term tend to challenge or at least seriously consider the validity of science, the problematic nature of language, and the fragmentation of identity and of society itself.

These interrelated tensions are central to the story of postmodernism.

Modernism

Any work that purports to deal with the idea of and construction of postmodernism must, of course, deal with the idea(s) of modernity and modernism. Modernism carries several concurrent meanings that tend to make defining it as a singular entity problematic. Thus, modernist literature, for instance, can be meaningfully defined as can postmodernist literature. The purpose of this introduction is to provide an overview of some of the major thinkers and theorists of modernism and postmodernism and to offer a basic literature review of these subjects. Given the overall scope and scale of articles and books that deal with these topics, this section should be regarded as a brief outline of modernism's range of meanings.

One of the major objects of this thesis is to trace the development of conceptions of postmodernism from its earliest uses to the point where it attains an intuitive (if not explicable) meaning amongst a broad segment of the population. That is not to claim that postmodern(ism/ist) is unproblematic as a term or category. However, I would argue that it is worth looking at its varied development precisely because people (of various stripes) are willing to identify themselves as such. This is not an attempt to argue that the term is a valid synthesis of various theories and thinkers, only that the term's history provides insights into its eventual rise into mainstream consciousness. This overview also reveals the intimately connected nature of the two terms; that is to say, the reflexive nature of postmodernism/ modernism creates an oppositional quality between the two. Thus, in an appropriately ironic gesture, this introduction is starting at the end of the story I am attempting to tell.

Modernism can refer to an architectural style/school, an artistic aesthetic, a literary school, and most broadly as an historical epoch. However, in this particular section, most of the definitions will focus on the broadest meanings of the word itself; the ideas expressed here amount to the idea of modernism and modernity.[3] That is to say, the definitions dealt with here are examining the meaning of modernism not from the vantage point of the particular fields but of the broader impact and meaning of its "project" though that does not mean that these authors do not deal with aesthetic/artistic issues. The following definitions are basically philosophical; these authors see modernism/modernity as containing its own identifiable internal logic to the extent that it represents a cogent world-view and guiding

---

[3] Modernism is used here to denote the philosophical, intellectual, and disciplinary philosophies that guided modernist movements. Modernity is used to denote the historical epoch and how life has been arranged and organized (which is defined variously by different authors.

motif. It is also worth noting, many of the authors defining modernism are doing so as a

direct challenge to the idea of postmodernism.

One of the most significant conceptions of modernism is derived from the

philosophical tradition of the Enlightenment. Amongst proponents of this view, Jurgen

Habermas is arguably the most significant; he is also a noted challenger of postmodernism.

"Modernity—An Incomplete Project" largely sketches out Habermas's conception of

modernism and why it should not be abandoned.[4] Essentially, he is arguing that modernism is

the continuation of "The Project of Enlightenment" and that it should not be vacated but

instead amended:

> The project of modernity formulated in the 18th century by the philosophers of the
> Enlightenment consisted in their efforts to develop objective science, universal
> morality and law, and autonomous art according to their inner logic. At the same
> time, this project intended to release the cognitive potentials of each of these domains
> from their esoteric forms. The Enlightenment philosophers wanted to utilize this
> accumulation of specialized culture for the enrichment of everyday life--that is to say,
> for the rational organization of everyday social life.[5]

For Habermas, the modernist project is the attempt to reunite the lost unities of science,

politics, and aesthetics through an open dialogue. His critique of modernism is precisely that

the tendency to rationalize all aspects of human inquiry and expression has prevented

meaningful discourse between people, institutions, and disciplines. Habermas's conception of

a rational basis of communication and consensus undergirds his critique.

In *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, Habermas spends considerable time

tracing the historical development of modernism and how different philosophers conceived

it. He spends much of the rest of the book engaging with "postmodern" thinkers of various

---

[4] Jurgen Habermas, "Modernity—An Incomplete Project," trans. Seyla Ben-Habib, *New German Critique* 22 (Winter 1980) 3-14.
[5] *Ibid*., 9.

stripes including Martin Heidegger, Jacques Derrida, and Michel Foucault.[6] This is

significant because it indicates that he is engaging postmodernism as a philosophy of sorts; in

(re)constructing modernism, Habermas is also constructing an oppositional philosophy.[7] He

is suspicious of the grand aims of Enlightenment projects and aware of their failures, but he

is unwilling to completely jettison them either. He is quite quick to critique what he views as

postmodernism's rejection of commensurability between cultures and the lack of universal

base of language (and thus communication itself). At its most basic level, Habermas is

arguing that values can be judged and to some extent ranked while in his view

postmodernism would reject any such ranking as being a form of cultural neo-imperialism.

Alain Touraine is the other side of the Habermas coin. Touraine's conception of

modernism is largely in line with Habermas's, but Touraine sees modernism as

unsalvageable. None the less, Touraine's view of modernity privileges rationalism:

> The most powerful Western conception of modernity, and the one which has had the most profound effects, asserts above all that rationalization required the destruction of so-called traditional social bonds…reason itself [was] the historical necessity that was paving the way for its triumph.[8]

Why I find this quote so evocative is precisely because it notes the basis of Western

modernity and what this rationalistic tendency has altered and destroyed. As will be

frequently noted in the coming pages, postmodernism is frequently expressed as a movement

towards something "pre-modern" even as it tends to accelerate a particular feature of

modernism.

---

[6] This list is emblematic of the sort of problems encountered when trying to label a group of people disparate thinkers.

[7] See Jurgen Habermas, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity: 12 Lectures*, trans. Fredrick Lawrence (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1987).

[8] Touraine, 10.

It is important to remember that as opposed to Habermas, Touraine is challenging the modernist project.[9] Touraine bluntly sees the Enlightenment bequeathed vision of modernity as being unsustainable and essentially in dire need of significant if not complete reconstruction. Essentially, he views the individualism encoded in the emancipatory philosophy of Enlightenment thinkers as having undermined collective values that have been further eroded by capitalism. He sees postmodernism as a break with several traditions of modernism including the shift from high and low cultural distinctions to a mode of cultural consumption, rejection of historicism, rejection of "the functional separation between domains of social life — art, the economy, politics — and its corollary, namely the ability of every domain to make use of instrumental reason," and, at the broadest level, the rejection of rationalization.[10] Conversely, Touraine sees the very foundations of modernism as the separation of domains and the rationalization of every separate domain.

Terry Eagleton's *The Illusion of Postmodernism* rejects postmodernism because it is without materialist basis and because he views it as essentially politically conservative by proxy of it rejection of Enlightenment ideals of freedom. The author's Marxist/materialist viewpoint unsurprisingly influences his critique of postmodernity.[11] Interestingly, Eagleton does not actually define modernism in *The Illusion of Postmodernism* although it is reasonable to derive a definition of it from his critiques. The author largely sees modernism as a world-view holding that truth exists. His critique of postmodern rejection of "truth,"

---

[9] In *Critique of Modernity*, Touraine analyzes and critiques Habermas and the "Frankfurt School" suggesting they incorrectly view the contemporary world as irrational. See 336-343.

[10] *Ibid*., 187-190.

[11] Eagleton distinguishes between "postmodernism" (a reference to contemporary culture) and "postmodernity" (as a historical period). However, for the purposes of this section, the differentiation is not necessary to maintain. See Terry Eagleton, *The Illusion of Postmodernism* (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1996). vii.

denial of meta-narratives, and tendency to treat all cultural values as relative reveals that

Eagleton sees these traits of the Enlightenment as central elements of intellectual honesty.

Ultimately, what he is arguing against is a nihilistic turn away from discussions about values

and meaning. Eagleton acknowledges that the legacy of the Enlightenment is bound in

European colonialism, twentieth-century genocides, and mass consumerism.[12] Conversely,

this legacy also bequeathed considerably positive technological, scientific, and social

changes as well. If nothing else, Eagleton is keenly aware of the rather dualistic legacy that

the Enlightenment bequeathed its inheritors. Eagleton is not defending modernism so much

as he is attacking postmodernism as an anti-rational system that inherently privileges the

"market" because as a concept it lacks any perceived human controls.

Fredrick Jameson is another Marxist inspired thinker who deals at considerable length

with postmodernisms and its varied meanings. Compared to Eagleton, Touraine, and even

Habermas, Jameson's analysis of postmodernism is systematic and extensive; he deals with

the variety of modes and fields in which postmodernism has arisen. He is also something of a

postmodernist in his own right. However, considering him in this section makes sense

because of his moderately critical stance. Jameson's definition of modernism is remarkably

succinct. Modernity, both as an epoch and as a process, is the period marked by the

persistence of old and new; it is the period before rationalization has completely forced man

out of nature and into culture.[13] Consequently, his view contrasts with Habermas; he sees

modernism's project as always leading towards the ultimate rationalization of every aspect of

experience and thus postmodernism as a logical (though by no means exclusive) reaction to

---

[12] *Ibid*., 107.
[13] Fredric Jameson, *Postmodernism, or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*, 2nd ed. (Durham, NC:Duke University Press, 1991). 311.

the success of the modernist project.[14] What modernism still has, because of the persistence of fragments of the past alongside monuments of the new, is a sense of historical placement and meaning. As will be discussed later, postmodernism is a reaction to the loss of historicism. Jameson is not trying to rehabilitate modernism so much as understand the material causation that created postmodernism.

While this list is by no means exhaustive, it is worth noting that those taking up the defense of modernism, largely against postmodernism, are politically leftist. Two of these critiques are made from a Marxist/materialist perspective which postmodernism (as they define and conceive of it) challenges their historical conception of causation and meaning. Given that one of the aspects of postmodernism that the Marxist inspired theorists all cite is the rejection on meta-narratives and essentialist/universal ideas, the objection is quite understandable. Postmodernism, as these thinkers construct it, also inherently challenges materialist conceptions of history because it is, as Eagleton notes, anti-essentialist at the most basic level.[15] Thus, Eagleton and Habermas take issue with the rejection of all universalism that postmodern philosophy in their view discards. Habermas's rejection is not on a material level so much as upon a communicative one. Conversely, Jameson and Touraine see modernism as a flawed project that is more or less beyond saving.

From the modernist (especially Marxist) perspective, the radical rejection of any move towards human progress and the tendency to believe in the incommensurability of cultural differences tends to lead to an uncritical acceptance of the status quo. Moreover, these radical rejections of any conception of progress inherently endorse the "market" and a

---

[14] *Ibid*., xiii. Jameson claims to have "pretended to believe that the postmodernism is as unusual as it thinks it is" obviously indicating he feels it is not.
[15] Eagleton, 97-104.

superior, because it contains no "narrative" and is at best a semi-rational implicitly beyond human direction. Its very appeal is its inhuman quality. A postmodern "program" would, at least by Habermas or Eagleton's definition, be a passive force capable only of (usually ironic) critique and not capable of actually formulating social action. In fact, it would privilege inaction inherently because no notion of universality or progress can, by the definitions provided by these authors at least, operate without dominating or oppressing some group or entity.

Thus, we see modernism as both an epoch and as an idea or ideal. What these various definitions agree on is that modernism, both the period and "program" itself, is predicated on rationalization, individualism, and a general faith in science as method for discovering truth. Tied to the previously mentioned faith in science is a widespread belief that universal values and meanings exist and that human progress is possible. Though several aforementioned authors critique this universalism, they all associate modernism with the belief in these potentials even if they see the logical conclusions of these trends as problematic or destructive in practice.

Postmodernisms

As was true of modernism, postmodernism can be used to describe a variety of styles in literature, art, performance, and architecture. Its use as an epochal designator is less common than a similar usage of modernism, but the idea of a postmodern era can be found in some interesting and unexpected places. However, as was the case with modernism, these ideas of postmodernism are largely philosophical in nature. At this point, it is worth again

noting that postmodernism is a diffuse term that groups together a variety of aesthetic, intellectual, and cultural meanings into something approaching a single cohesive unit. Consequently, it should be remembered that these definitions are synthesized and distilled from a complex constellation of thinkers and theorists. Part of the point of this thesis is to trace the varied and various uses of the term from its embryonic stage to its still amebic maturity.

It is useful to start with the definitions of postmodernism offered by the authors noted above. Eagleton and Habermas all come to similar definitions of what the term means. Namely, they all note that postmodernism rejects the potential of universal meanings of human life, meta-narratives, and any potential for true understanding between different cultures. Given the Marxist materialist background of two of these three thinkers and the communication theory of the other, the rejection of unifying aspect of human experience, their critique of postmodernism is inherent.[16] In a very significant way, postmodernism (as it is defined by them) challenges the historicism central to any conception of human "progress" and improvement. As previously mentioned, Habermas's moniker of "young conservatives" for the postmodernists is telling. Habermas and Eagleton would contend that whatever critiques can be offered by the postmodernist, they are complicit in the economic/political system that that they purport to contest. Their rejection narratives of emancipation inherently make them apathetic towards political action; for all the radicalism in their critiques, postmodernists perpetuate the status quo.

---

[16] Habermas is associated with the Marxist Frankfurt School though he is not a self-identifying Marxist nor is his thinking overtly materialist.

Jameson deals with postmodernism both in a broad, theoretical sense, and in a variety of more particular examples (art, film, architecture). However, unlike Eagleton, Jameson sees postmodernism not as an aberration but as a reaction to "late capitalism" and the end of the modernization process.[17] In other words, he is critical and challenges postmodern claims but sees them as an understandable, and not altogether unique, response to a significant shift within the economic system itself from the manufacture of material good to something akin to the reproduction of images and ideas.[18] It is the point at which the past has been completely replaced by "simulacra" of the past. Postmodernism is the reaction to modernisms triumph as opposed to being a reaction *against* it.

Touraine, though not writing as a direct response to postmodernism still has a definite sense of what the term to means and what it represents:

> The post-modernist movement thus takes to extremes the destruction of the modernist representation of the world. It rejects the functional differentiation of the world. It rejects the functional differentiation between domains of social life — art, the economy, politics — and its corollary, namely the ability of every domain to make use of instrumental reason. It therefore also rejects the divorce between a high culture…and mass culture.[19]

Touraine recognizes the tendency for postmodernism to reject previously important categories of differentiation in such way as to challenge the previously prevailing modes of representation. Though the aforementioned indicates, above all, that postmodernism problematizes categorization and by proxy challenges reason on several epistemological grounds.

---

[17] Jameson, ix.
[18] *Ibid*., 6.
[19] Touraine, 190.

A brief overview of the definitions Habermas, Eagleton, Jameson, and Touraine offer for postmodernism all note several tendencies. Foremost, they note the rejection of meta-narratives and the possibility of universal human values. Postmodernism, as defined by its critics then rejects two of the major planks of the Enlightenment, namely the potential for science to explain a rational, knowable universe and the possibility of universally shared human values derived by rational means. Postmodernists also tend to see modernism as strategy of dominion complicit in historical events like slavery, colonization, and genocide. Jameson and Eagleton also conceive of postmodernism as an epoch which is the result of modernism/market capitalism successfully rationalizing every aspect of existence. Overall, though these authors are writing from a variety of viewpoints for a variety of reasons, the definition they derive is fairly cohesive. However, it would be worth remembering that variety exists in these definitions as well and it is especially important to remember the relationship between postmodernism and modernism that tends to create a reflexive relationship between the two ideas.

It would only be appropriate to also consider postmodernism from the postmodernist perspective as well. Many philosophers and thinkers are resistant to being labeled postmodern for a variety of reasons. Generally speaking, it carries a pejorative connotation in many circles. Thus, the self-identification of the two thinkers discussed below is interesting because of their willingness to accept and embrace the label. Though the self-reflexive nature of the definitions of these terms has been previously mentioned, it is worth noting that these various authors also tend to critique the writings of their respective peers and counterparts.

Habermas and Jean-Fancois Lyotard respectively criticize each other fairly frequently for instance.

One of the most famous of these iconoclastic self-identifiers is Lyotard. He has written several books on the subject including *Postmodernism Explained* and *The Postmodern Condition: A Report of Knowledge*. He manages to make a remarkably succinct definition of postmodernism; it is the rejection of meta-narratives.[20] By meta-narrative Lyotard means the assumed progress of science and by proxy modern society predicated on the belief in objective scientific progress. Progress is assumed in the basic methodology in that ever more accurate testing leads to more perfect theories and conceptions of nature. He is also arguing that science is at least in part a type of word game that assumes as commensurability of meanings between various domains/disciplines that defies validation. Consequently, science is at a fairly basic level a matter of word games and fragmentation. Science can only appear systematic because the accepted meta-narrative masks the provisionally of the process itself. Lyotard sees modernism as fundamentally predicated on a culturally endorsed scientific strategy that masked its own limitations and promised emancipation it could not deliver.

Beginning of the Beginning

What is clear from the preceding analysis is that modernism and postmodernism are defined in an oppositional manner. Also, for a term deemed indefinable, the various opponents and proponents of postmodernism all argue essentially similar characteristics. One

---

[20] Jean-Francios Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, trans. Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), xxiv.

of the arguments of this thesis is that postmodernism's rise to a position of cultural significance and prevalence required a specific relationship to a broadly identifiable modernist tradition. However, this arrangement requires a considerable amount of reduction and synthesizing to create a unified conception. In other words, I am attempting to trace out the various instances where postmodernism occurred and how thinkers conceived of the modernist tradition they were evoking and how they attempted to make postmodernism a valid and unique position relative to it.

This is a history of postmodernisms and an exploration of how and why the term came to mean something akin to the rejection of previously esteemed concepts of progress and unbiased truth as opposed to simply an artistic style or literary technique. The history of postmodernism itself reveals that the word's meanings defy a simple binary of modernism and postmodernism as defined above. Instead, what is consistently revealed is the postmodernism is an excellent indicator of tensions that exist within the various concepts of modernity/modernism. Postmodernism's history is important precisely because it reveals the intellectual and cultural context in which it was developed. Thus, postmodernism not only has a history in its own right, but also provides a window into the intellectual currents that produced its various permutations.

CHAPTER TWO
Postmodernisms: 1914-1966

"The element of novelty and of shock is in the naming of this as 'postmodernism.'"
Eldred C. Vanderlaan, 1926.[1]

As the title of this chapter would suggest, this section is about a number of different

postmodernisms. That is to say, the multiplicity of meanings that postmodernism

encompasses has considerable historical precedence. By focusing on its historical

development, a clearer picture of its various metamorphoses can be reached. The word

"postmodern" is practically indefinable if taken as a single monolithic term. It would be more

accurate to speak of "postmodernisms" than it would be to speak of it as a singular entity. As

Pauline Rosenau puts it: "This cut-and-paste character of post-modernism, its absence of

unity, is both a strength and a weakness. Everyone can find something about it with which to

agree."[2] However, postmodernism's symbiotic relationship with modernism creates a

framework of meaning. The variety within postmodernism is partially, at least, tied to the

variety that exists within modernism as well.

This chapter will focus on the earliest uses of "postmodernism." These early uses

share little direct meaning with contemporary debates and uses of the word; however, they do

share a similar symbiotic relationship. These early uses do suggest several important things

about the ways in which postmodernism derives its meaning. Thus, the argument of this

chapter is not that postmodernism's meaning has been static but instead that it functions

---

[1] Eldred C. Vanderlaan, "The Modernist Controversy Once More," *The Journal of Religion* 6 no. 6 (1926), 629-633. 630.
[2] Pauline Rosenau, *Post-Modernism and the Social Sciences* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 14.

within a particular framework relative to modernism and to larger social/cultural issues. Postmodernism is a reaction to modernism's perceived failures and inherently functions in relation to modernism. Postmodernism is always a possibility within a modernist movement. This chapter deals with the earliest (if not premature) moments of this inescapable symbiosis.

It is fitting that such a flexible term would have a varied history of development. However, many of these early, often provisional, uses of "postmodern" are the products of writers in subjects that tend to be on the periphery of contemporary debates about postmodernism. The varied history of the idea of postmodernism is, if nothing else, an excellent example of the unexpected origins of words and meanings. It is also an interesting example of a debate that was prefigured and largely predicted by the earlier limited uses of the term but never actually part of the discussion.

Certainly, the concept of postmodernism has a history and had an opportunity to embed itself into either large debates within specific disciplines or even gain some traction as a broadly evocative term in its own right. That postmodernism established itself in the 1960s and especially the 1970s is an important aspect of its history. The lack of earlier entrenchment within both specific disciples and wider culture suggests the importance of broader intellectual currents in shaping receptivity. Modernism had to become established and essentially accepted before postmodernism can effectively challenge it. Postmodernism tends to evoke aspects or elements of modernism and tends to draw attention to its connections to modernism. Postmodernism addresses modernism's perceived failures and as its foil.

Before delving into the origins of the term, it is worth considering "postmodern" and its various linguistic offshoots. Postmodernism is more clearly defined within those fields

that have some sense of modernism — especially literature and architecture. Consequently, in a field like philosophy, which lacks a discernable modernist movement, the idea of postmodern is difficult to define because of its lack of a predecessor. Given the fact that distinct modernist movements exist in different disciplines, it is unsurprising that different postmodernisms would develop. Thus, literature and architecture are frequently cited as examples of fields with a discernable postmodern movement because they had a recognizable, if varied, modernist movement.

In effect, the word itself suggests that postmodernism, in its various forms, tends to be reflective or at least aware of its own predecessor. Postmodernism also frequently has an underlying connotation of both the acceleration of modernism and an attempt to return to something from an earlier, lost epoch. Regardless of the existence of an accepted modernist movement, almost all permutations of postmodernism tend to have an element of looking to the past while attempting to move forward often accelerating an aspect of contemporary thought or theory. Postmodernism tends to create a distinct focus on modernism even though the term itself should indicate something beyond modernism itself. In a sense, postmodern is also, though with a variety of distinct meanings, a movement towards something pre-modern. It is a selective rejection of modernism and a selective, even idealized, reflection upon a previous period that is perceived to be pre-modern. However, as Eldred C. Vanderlaan notes the "novelty and… shock… of… 'postmodernism'" is part of its power, especially during the earliest periods of its use, is the fact that the term is jarring.[3] Given its proliferation during 1980s through the present, it is difficult to understand how unsettling this paradoxical pairing would have been, especially in a society that often prided itself on its own modernity.

---

[3] Vanderlaan, 630.

Theological Postmodernisms (1914-1926)

Given the contemporary debates about postmodernism, it is surprising that the earliest uses of the term, at least in English, are part of a Christian debate on theology and the Bible. Modernism is technically different from liberal theology; however, for the purposes of this paper and the ease with which they are used interchangeably, the two terms will be considered nearly equivalent and understandably privilege the title of modernism over that of liberalism. Proponents of the liberal/modernist view approach the Bible as a fallible text, ignored or at least reconsidered the teachings of the church fathers by focusing on the hermeneutics as opposed to the accepted canon, and approach religious dogmas as evolving as opposed to static. Simply, proponents of Christian modernism see the Bible as both a theological text and the product of the society that produced it; it has a divine and a temporal message that cannot be separated from each other.

Modernism is, at least from a chronological standpoint, somewhat problematic in its own right given the fact that the approach to the Bible elucidated above has a fairly long history, starting as early as the seventeenth century.[4] However, these issues really came to the forefront in the late ninetieth-century as absolute scriptural accuracy was increasingly disproved both from a scientific standpoint as well as a hermeneutical one. Modernism was the logical outgrowth of an increasingly scientifically minded and a growingly analytically sophisticated society. "One key intellectual idea characterizes these attempts: people start to look beyond the Church for answers to their questions," as the *Blackwell Companion to*

---

[4] Garrett Green, "Modernity," in *The Blackwell Companion to Modern Theology* ed. Gareth Jones (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing , 2004), 177.

Modern Theology defines modernism in its broadest sense.[5] For our purposes, modernism is both beyond the Church and is also an approach to the Bible that goes beyond simply attempting to understand the scriptures within its own self-contained context. The type of religious modernism examined within this chapter is an attempt to understand the Bible both as a text and comprehend the contexts relevant to its writing. Moreover, in a very interesting way, these theological thinkers dealt with issues of both the provisional nature of man's understanding of and relationship with God as well as the conditional nature of non-religious knowledge. Modernism, even in a religious context, contained an important element of postmodernism.

Fundamentalism, the literal infallible truth of the Bible and usually the validity the church fathers' interpretation, was the Protestant reaction to the liberalized theology, especially as modernism attempted to move beyond the Bible itself. Liberal/modernist theology from the fundamentalist point of view secularized the church and thus the Christian message was lost. The Catholic response was more a matter of rejecting the priests as heterodox and censuring them. Given the hierarchical nature of the Catholicism itself, the issue was shelved without an open and sometimes messy debate. These debates were especially pronounced in the Presbyterian Church; though, issues of biblical interpretation and creed created fissions throughout many Protestant denominations.[6] It is within these debates about modernism (or liberalism) that the idea of postmodernism is first explored.[7] While this context is rare within contemporary debates, the fact that it appears within this

---

[5] Gareth Jones, introduction to *The Blackwell Companion to Modern Theology* ed. Gareth Jones (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing , 2004), xiv.
[6] Green, 175.
[7] No examples of post-liberalism have been found within any of the sources. It seems likely that modernism's connotation of current or contemporary appealed to the religious writers that utilized the term. At least one author did explain his choice of "post-modern" over "neo-modern."

framework as early as it does reveals both the paradoxical concurrency of postmodernism's tendency to appeal to "pre-modern" qualities even as it accelerates modernism.

Bernard I. Bell wrote the most clearly developed conception of religious postmodernism. Moreover, his conception of postmodernism in relation to modernism is emblematic of the relationship the two terms share with each other. Bell was an Episcopalian Minister and warden of St. Stephen's College in Annandale-on-Hudson, New York (now known as Bard College) from 1919 to 1933 and his experiences dealing with students influenced some of his theological points.[8] In spite of the fact he viewed modernism and liberalism as inappropriately conflated ideas, the title of his work, *Postmodernism and Other Essays*, reflects an engagement with modernism even though the author sees his own arguments as related to theological liberalism.[9] Bell defines modernism as the belief that while "the facts of Christian theology were possibly, even probably, not literally true, still one ought to express belief in them because they represent certain valuable elements in life and have certain good effects upon those who assert them."[10] Liberalism is, by his own partially developed definition, simply an approach to the Bible as a text and not a religious stance per say. For Bell, modernism was not really invalid, but it was incomplete, a project that could only be completed through its own reconsideration and reassessment.[11] If Protestantism is based around the truth of the Bible and faith in man's intellect to interpret it, modernism makes the search for religious truth arduous if not impossible because it problematizes the validity of the scriptures. Put another way, approaching the Bible critically

---

[8] Helene Tieger, "History of Bard," Bard College, accessed April 29, 2011, http://www.bard.edu/about/history/.
[9] Bernard Bell, *Postmodernism and Other Essays* (Milwaukee: Morehouse Publishing, 1926), 7. Throughout the work, the author uses postmodern (ism/ist, ect.) as a single word and he always capitalizes it.
[10] *Ibid*., 7.
[11] *Ibid*., 53-54.

as both divinely inspired but still imperfect makes the search for religious truth more than an exercise in interpretation and analysis. Modernism removes, or at least greatly undermines, one of the central tenants of Protestant thought by allowing the potential for fallacy.[12] What options then remain?

Bell rejects fundamentalism as a viable response; "[abandoning fundamentalism] is critically and scientifically proved a necessity."[13] For the author, taking the Bible as literal truth is intellectually disingenuous and only solves part of the problem at best; the truths inherent in the scriptures as read by John Calvin or Martin Luther are simply not accessible to a contemporary reader. Truth, even theologically, is conditional to its own time and place. Consequently, fundamentalism is both anti-rational and unsustainable precisely because it requires an outright rejection of the contemporary world. *Postmodernism and Other Essays* is a reaction to the religious debates and increasing public secularism. The author saw the solution for the crisis in Protestantism as something beyond the scriptures and beyond the traditional dogma.

Interesting, and importantly, the author examines the limits of scientific truth and knowledge as well. Given his stance on fundamentalism, it is not shocking that he hold science as a valid and important endeavor. However, Bell argues that science is limited in a very important way. Namely, it cannot answer questions beyond its own particular scope. Science tends to have no definitive answers about those questions most germane to addressing what and where we are. For the most part, Bell takes a pragmatic approach to science; its truths are conditional but not invalid and provide important facts. Yet, science cannot replace Christianity as an approach to truth. Though Bell never engages with the idea

---

[12] *Ibid.*, 3.
[13] *Ibid.*, 9.

that science is a narrative, his argument about science coincides with contemporary

postmodern skepticism towards science in several interesting ways.

Bell's central critique of science and his view of theology is that Christianity offers

worthwhile answers to questions that science cannot, by its own limitations, come close to

approaching: "merely by scientific methods, nothing of basic importance, of primary

importance, of ontological importance, can be discovered."[14] Essentially, Bell is challenging

science's pretensions to transcendent truth and is inherently contesting its own self-sustaining

justification by critiquing ontological limitations. In his view, science cannot ever get

completely to the core of what anything is, thus as a technique it cannot ever arrive at truth

about questions as complex as the nature of being. Bell's critique of the limits of science is

predicated on the idea that science cannot ask certain kinds of questions. He writes "There

are only three questions recognized by scientists as legitimately characteristic of science:

'What is it?' 'What does it do?' 'How does it do it?'"[15] Consequently, science does not and

cannot approach questions of "Why," which Bell sees as the basic issue driving all human

inquiry towards truth. At its core, Bell's theological argument is that Christianity is a way of

coming to truth that other branches of knowledge cannot match.

His proposition, "postmodern faith," is an interesting case of the acceleration and

withdrawal from modernism that characterizes much of what would later come to pass as

postmodernism. Bell's proscribed postmodern man is an interesting mix of modernity and

mysticism.[16] The center of the postmodern man's faith is the incarnation of Christ, "God-

---

[14] *Ibid.*, 21-22.
[15] *Ibid.*, 23.
[16] *Ibid.*, 54.

made-man" as he puts it.[17] Given the schisms Protestant denominations were dealing with, and inspired him to write, his indifference and even hostility towards the intricacies of doctrine makes sense.

What, then, does Bell's postmodernism suggest about the future permutations of the term? On one level, certainly, the author's arguments and observations are conventional if not conservative. However, what is striking about his analysis is both his critique of science and his acceptance of the ever changing nature of humanity's relationship with God. As we have seen, Bell's analysis of science is not dismissive. He does argue that science cannot reasonably answer questions about what humans are or what the universe really is. He also touches on the incommensurability of different scientific disciplines as well. This point is especially interesting and evocative because it prefigures aspects of skepticism towards science as truth that are associated with contemporary postmodernism. His idea of the "Postmodern man" is based around several tenets, but most especially around the centrality of the Incarnation of God into man as the basis from which the rest of Christian faith must come.[18] The Incarnation is the central focus of all of his prescriptive suggestions for what Postmodern (Christian) faith must become to provide leadership in a troubled time. Bell is unequivocally dismissive of doctrine because it serves to complicate and otherwise obscure the basic foundation of Christian faith. Moreover, this new man must be able to combine his faith in the divine with the observable, repeatable facts of science.

Thus, Bell's postmodernism is a hybrid of rationalism and mysticism. In fact, his postmodern faith is, in his mind at least, a way to return to the unity of the Catholic Church that was torn asunder by debates of doctrine. The author's attempt to reduce doctrinal debate

---

[17] *Ibid.*, 55.
[18] *Ibid.*, 54, 55, 57. See especially points 1, 3, and 4.

down to a single point is both a testament to the debates within Protestantism during the 1920s and a radical reduction of the debate down to one issue. In some ways, this is similar to what occurs in literary postmodernism because it focuses very extenuating an existing trait (silence for instance). That author reduces all doctrinal debates down to a single issue in much the same way that literary postmodernists privileged specific aspects of modernism; the only truth that matters in the Bible is the miracle of the Incarnation. Bell's postmodern man/faith really resides in three places as once: the contemporary realm of science, a pre-modern time of Catholic unity, and an idealized future bereft of Protestant strife. He or she must be scientist and a skeptic, a rationalist and a believer in miracles.

Bell's postmodernism is a product of at least a few different issues; however two specific points merit special attention. The first is the aforementioned liberal/fundamental debate in various Protestant denominations. Bell's anti-doctrinarism and desire of broad Christian unity obviously address the divisive and occasional vitriolic debate. This is the primary context in which his vision of postmodernism is developed. The author's vision is a product of these debates but also an attempt to move beyond them. According to a review of books in *The Journal of Religion*, *Postmodernism and Other Essays* was one of a number of monographs addressing the Protestant infighting. Eldred Vanderlaan's review of Bell's book is dismissive for the most part and contends that postmodernism is simply "Anglo-Catholicism" (privileging the Catholic as opposed to Protestant traditions of the Anglican Church) with some attention to science.[19] The reviewer also notes that Bell's work is most distinguishable from the other works because his use of the word "postmodern," and it

---

[19] Vanderlaan, 629-630.

certainly caught the attention of the reviewer. It is the "element of shock and novelty" that separates Bell's book from other "typical…statements[s] of Anglo-Catholicism."[20]

While Bell's use of postmodern might have been calculated in part because it is a jarring juxtaposition, the author still made a conscious choice to use the term. Furthermore, given the early date of the publication, the author could effectively craft the term without much in the way of preconceptions excepting the apparent paradox in pairing the two terms. I am arguing, essentially, that Bell's use of postmodern was improvisational and provisional but central to his theological thesis. His postmodern faith is a paradoxical mix of late-medieval unity, the willing suspicion of disbelief in regards to the central miracle of Christianity, and a realist/pragmatic faith in science to tell of some conditional truths. Vanderlaan himself describes Bell's postmodernism as "a Christianity both older and newer than either orthodox Protestantism or recent liberalism."[21] At least part of *Postmodernism and Other Essay'*s theology is constructed around this supra-chronological idea of being both past, present, and beyond the contemporary.

The other issue lurking slightly deeper and less explicitly in the text is World War I and its aftermath. At first glace, the religious issues he addresses would only seem to apply to WWI by proxy. When the book was published, 1926, the war was less than a decade old, but the war was hardly an overtly a religious affair. One of Bell's chapter's, "The Church and the Young Man," was largely written out of his experiences as Senior Chaplin at The Great Lakes Naval Training Station, though he had no direct contact with war.[22] However, at least

---

[20] *Ibid*., 630.
[21] *Ibid.*, 629.
[22] See Bell, 95-108.

partly, the loss of faith in science as a means to getting to truth certainly had to shake a

society generally confident in its own inevitable progress:

> That what is good and proper now may be not only improper but evil a hundred years
> from now, would have seemed a statement not only blasphemous but insane. There
> could be no evolution of Christian ethics conceivable by a generation which ignored
> the possibility of any evolution at all… In short, the Victorian made one fatal mistake
> when he thought of his age as full grown; another when he supposed himself morally
> educated instead of [sic] educatable.[23]

His own sense of the conditional nature of knowledge and truth is likely connected to the

ways in which scientific progress aided large-scale slaughter during WWI. The Great War

punctuated both the shortcomings of the world bequeathed by the Victorians and its

inexorable demise.

Bell's *Postmodernism and Other Essays* was not the first theological work to use the

term postmodern. J. M. Thompson used the term "Post-Modernism" as the title of an article

published in July 1914, twelve years before the paradoxical Anglican's book appeared in

print. Essentially, Bell's postmodernism is developed from a more fully realized version of

modernism. Thompson defines modernism as a state of unrest and more technically as the

attempt to combine liberal theology with conservative criticism.[24] For the most part, his

definition of modernism is more or less consistent with Bell's, though it is interesting that

Thompson is a Catholic and Bell an Anglican. In that sense, Thompson's reaction is tied to

the Catholic suppression of the movement as opposed to *Postmodernism and Other Essays*

response to debates within Protestant denominations.

What then is postmodernism for Thompson? The question the author actually poses is

"Why postmodernism?" Interestingly, Thompson likens "Post-Modernism" to the Post-

---

[23] *Ibid*., 116, 119.
[24] J.M. Thompson, "Post-Modernism," *The Hibbert Journal* 12 no. 4 (1914), 733-745. 733-735.

Impressionist movement arguing that both are attempts to create more accurate portrayals by challenging the conventional presentations.[25] In the case of Post-Impressionism this reconceptualization is focused on experiencing environments; in the case of theology it is focused on "directly felt values of spiritual things."[26] The old forms, though not completely useless, are no longer capable of representing faith; a new form is needed. At its core, Thompson's postmodernism is largely an attempt to reconcile the traditions of the Catholic faith with the modern biblical criticism, but it is also a more involved theological development and one that is not reversible: "He [the Post-Modernist] does not deceive himself into thinking that all he has to do is to reinterpret and re-express unchanging faith. He believes that faith has changed, and is changing far more than one would judge from the rigidity of its formulæ."[27]

The author's proposed postmodernism is partially predicated upon this acknowledgement that faith and worship are not static entities. In truth, this is an essentially modernist viewpoint. Like Bell, Thompson's postmodernism is characterized by its focus on reclaiming a foundational past and by accelerating modernism. The author claims that modernism was doomed by its double-mindedness, by the fact that theological liberalism cannot function within an essentially conservative institution. Postmodernism, as proposed by Thompson, is a reconsideration of Catholic history, scriptural interpretation, and a position beyond the labels of conservative or liberal. His postmodernism is old, contemporary, and beyond contemporary concurrently. His idea of the postmodern is largely not a rejection of Catholic tradition because the traditions were wrong. Instead, Thompson's

---

[25] *Ibid*., 737.
[26] *Ibid.*, 737.
[27] *Ibid.*, 742.

28

argument is that these modes of worship have become outdated and they should be replaced by something that more accurately represent contemporary religious experience. The guiding motivation for both Bell and Thompson is the idea that the modernist mode of worship and interpretation was inadequate.

The modernist/ fundamentalist debates were largely decided by the 1930s in most denominations. Consequently, religious uses of postmodern did not appear again until the 1950s and in a much different context than the original ones discussed previously. In the lull between the earliest uses and the later religious uses, the world had changed drastically and the idea of modernity has also seemingly shifted for some thinkers as well.

It is also worth noting that these authors dealt with and worked in fairly similar intellectual conditions. That is not to say that these authors did not develop distinct views about theological topics, but they it is worth noting that these authors all share certain commonalities that explain and contextualize their respective writings. Namely, they all share a connection to theological debates dealing with issues of theological modernism. Consequently, Bell's analysis (from the Anglican perspective) and Thompson's (from the Catholic perspective) belong to the same general rupture within various sects both orthodox and Protestant. Vanderlaan's review of *Post-Modernism and Other Essays* is part of a larger review of books and pamphlets dealing the modernist/ fundamentalist debates. Consequently, both authors' use of postmodernism should be understood as a means of critiquing theological modernism while also trying to coopt the idea of modernism itself. Essentially, these examples of postmodernism are direct products of the modernist debate and understanding that context is central to contextualizing their arguments.

Thus, Bell, Thompson, and Vanderlaan utilized or at least grappled with the idea of Christian theological postmodernism before the 1930s. Moreover, these debates were directly related to theological modernism. The use of postmodern was both novel and to some extent logical. Given the symbiotic nature of the postmodernism and modernism along with the terminology and debate itself, this usage makes sense. Both Thompson and Bell are arguing that postmodernism contains a potential way around the problems of religious modernism. Modernism (however it is defined) creates the necessary condition for postmodernism to arise regardless of the area of debate.

Epochal Postmodernisms (1939-1954)

While it has previously been pointed out that postmodern is most effectively articulated and expressed within fields that have some sense of a modernist movement, the use of the term, even during its fairly early history, was not limited to such instances. Arnold Toynbee's use of "Post-Modern" in his substantial *A Study of History* is decidedly non-religious/theological. Toynbee was a British historian whose twelve volume *A Study of History*, published between 1934-1960, is an analysis of the rise and fall of civilizations based around the idea that civilizations are formed through the struggle to control the environment and people. In other words, Toynbee's work is a meta-history of the highest order; he is trying to find a universal framework for the rise and fall of civilizations. [28]

His use of term is still quite interesting both because it chronologically fits into the middle of early religious use of postmodern and later permutations. Moreover, Toynbee's use prefigures a shift that occurs within the religious uses of the term as well. Namely, his use of

---

[28] Arnold J. Toynbee, *The Disintegrations of Civilizations* vol. 5 of *A Study of History* (London: Oxford University Press, 1939).

postmodern is epochal as opposed to disciplinary. That is to say, postmodernism can be used to label a period of time or can be utilized to describe a particular architectural or literary style. Toynbee's use reflects a different sense of meaning that is both similar in several regards to previous usages yet less specific.

Toynbee's use of the term is extremely limited given the fact he mentions "Post-Modern" only once in his twelve-volume *A Study of History*. His focus through his sizable work is how civilizations coalesce, stabilize, function, and collapse. However, even if his idea of postmodern is unimportant to the overall scope of his work, it does represent the first use of the term in a historical context. Both Bell and Thompson's use of the term have chronological elements to them, but their postmodernism is always defined in relation to theological modernism. Put another way, Toynbee uses postmodern to encapsulate an epoch: "The contest for hegemony between the Hapsburgs and the Bourbons…inaugurated the Modern age of our Western history…our own 'Post-Modern' Age has been inaugurated by the General War of 1914-1918."[29] Certainly, his usage carries the same sort of novelty that the earlier religious uses of the term engendered. Yet, even if Bell and Thompson utilized the term for its unsettling paradox, postmodern(ism/ity) is still related directly to a sense of modern(sim/ity).

Toynbee, however, deals with the diffuse and flexible idea of modernity as a historical period. This postmodernism is part of a world torn asunder and destabilized by an epoch-ending war. At the very least, this postmodern world Toynbee sees is the product of war much the same way as modernity was; however, the technological advances that WWI illustrated seemingly created a world largely in paradox. Toynbee published volume V (cited

---

[29] *Ibid*., 43.

here) in 1939 before WWII; the second "General War" would also instigate another author to utilize postmodern as representing a fundamental fracturing of modernity. Of course, the idea of modernity is problematic because of its flexibility. Toynbee defines the modern period as beginning with seventeenth-century dynastic struggles and ending with the restructuring of Europe following WWI. Toynbee's modernity could be defined more or less as the rise of European powers and the subsequent destruction of these powers by an essentially fratricidal war. Toynbee is not convinced that Western civilization has collapsed completely, merely that it was undergoing a restructuring that is clearly demarcated by WWI. Postmodernism represents the collapse (or at least the potential collapse) of the old order. Even when it is used as a label for an epoch, postmodernism still maintains a symbiotic relationship with modernism.

Elwyn Trueblood's 1954 *The Dawn of the Post-Modern Era* is a hybrid of the earlier theological works by Bell and Thompson and the epochal/chronological of Toynbee. Trueblood was an ordained Baptist minister and college professor (he got his doctorate in theology from the University of Louisville); he wrote several books on religion and religious issues, especially the sociology of faith.[30] However, his postmodernism is not tied to theological modernism in the same way that Bell and Thompson's were. His conception of postmodernism is, like Toynbee, a reflection on the contemporary world as opposed to an attempt to engage an existing, field-specific definition of modernism. Bell and Thompson's postmodernism is intimately tied to a theological debate; Trueblood's postmodernism is very much an analysis of society and is divorced from the debates about religious modernism. Trueblood is critiquing the "modern" world. As his background would suggest, this is a work

---

[30] "Trueblood, Elwyn Judson," *Who's Who in the South and Southwest* 6th ed. (Chicago: Marquis Who's Who, 1959), 828.

about religion, but it is equally a book about the uncertain world of nuclear proliferation and the USSR, of an America divided between rich and poor. Toynbee's postmodernism is the product of WWI; Elwyn Trueblood's postmodernism is the byproduct of WWII. As the title itself suggests, his postmodernism is an era not the specific characteristics of a disciplinary subfield. In spite of the religious background of the author, *Dawn of the Post-Modern Era* is as much a tract about the state of America's poor as it is about faith and God.

That is not to say that Trueblood does not attempt to explain both the cause of the break between modern and postmodern. The essential element of the epochal shift was not simply WWII or even the divided world that followed; it was the splitting of the atom and subsequent creation of atomic weapons: "The split atom would not be quite so epochally determinative if we did not also have a split humanity. But the two developments together have made modern man an anachronism and are unmistakably demanding a different kind of person—whom we may well call post-modern man."[31] The author's footnote on "post-modern man" is worth considering in its own right as well. Trueblood's explanation for using "post-modern" as opposed to "neo-modern" is that the latter term fails to fully represent the break between from "recent modern man."[32] The "recent modern man" is something of an enigma in his (and presumably her) own right. Essentially, this person is average, a product of their age, an age now passed. Put another way, this "recent modern man" is the person of the pre-atomic age; the inadequacy of the old "man" in this "new world" is compounded by the ubiquity of the outdated recent modern man. Trueblood's split between modernity and postmodernity is both abrupt and permanent in opinion. Postmodernism is an attempt to

---

[31] Elwyn J. Trueblood, *The Dawn of the Post-Modern Era: Dimensions of Human Life in the Last Half of the Twentieth Century* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1954), 2.
[32] See note two. *Ibid*., 181.

restore the unity of between various aspects of life that existed in the pre-modern era. Trueblood, however, is not shunning technological advances, he simply wants them to serve humanity.

What is a "post-modern man?" Trueblood's vision is of a man (and woman) fully aware of the various dimensions of human life. In short, the author adamantly believes that a person aware of the humanity of his fellow man and the potentiality of science to foster life and general wellbeing or create awesomely destructive forces. In short, the new-man must be capable of negotiating the pitfalls and potentials of the technological advances of the "post-modern" age and respect his fellow man. As the author points out, "Modern philosophies have become increasingly fractional and materialistic. Post-modern man will need to restore unity and balance…"[33] The modern man fell far short of keeping the various forces of his life balanced; this is precisely what the "post-modern" man must do. [34] Trueblood's modernism is one of factions and fractures; his is postmodernism– of unities and cohesion.

However, while the author uses "post" to designate the difference between the two periods, "modern" still connects the two. Although, Trueblood never deals with the common ties between his proposed two periods, the technological advances that determined the rupturing of the two epochs are the logical conclusion of modernism. Put another way, the advances that ultimately ended the modern era accelerate throughout the postmodern era. Trueblood's modernism is defined by the dual efforts to find rational/mechanical explanations for natural phenomena and an overall focus on individualism.[35] Trueblood's

---

[33] *Ibid*., 11.
[34] *Ibid*., 11-18.
[35] *Ibid*., 3, 19.

assessment of modernity's materialism and individualism indicates that the life has become

hopelessly fragmented and isolated; "modern" life is not whole.

Trueblood certainly was not the first author to deal with the idea of the postmodern

person; Bell and especially Thompson both talked about the idea of a postmodern man fairly

extensively. However, neither of the early religious writers dealt with postmodernism in the

sense that Trueblood does. Bell approaches his religious stance in a broad way and addresses

issues of science and economics, but the focus is always more or less related back to the

religious issues he outlines. Bell and Trueblood deal with science in similar ways though.

Both author's attempt to present science as valid and worthwhile endeavors (*Dawn of the

Post-Modern Era*'s entire epochal structure is derived from a scientific discovery), but they

also attempt to illustrate the limits of the various branches of inquiry. Trueblood argues, in

much the same way that Bell did almost thirty years before him, that science need not and

should not be practiced in conflict with religious faith:

> Moral-spiritual forces and mechanical-material forces must be drastically realigned;
> much better balances must be established between them, if humanity is to survive and
> to advance in the atomic age. It is precisely at this point that post-modernity must
> make its most complete break with modernity.[36]

What makes Trueblood's word play interesting is the fact that he is attempting to draw

attention to the connections between elements. Drawing attention to the connection between

moral and spiritual is not difficult to make. However, especially given his emphasis on

unifying various aspects of life, part of Trueblood's thesis is an attempt to justify a limited

return to the unification of the medieval period.

---

[36] *Ibid*., 18.

Part of *Dawn of the Post-Modern Era*'s focus is on the aforementioned disintegration. Trueblood's multiplicity is, to a certain extent at least, a reaction against those traits he sees in modernism as being most harmful and disruptive. Although the author is operating largely if not wholly outside of the theological modernism (and thus outside of a clearly defined modernist movement), Trueblood's postmodernism still displays aspects of the acceleration of modernism and the attempt to return to elements of the past. Naturally, the technological/ scientific advancements that ultimately demarcated the separation of the two eras were only going to continue and increase in speed. Yet, much of his philosophical stance is an attempt to reintegrate the disparate elements of modern existence. In that sense at least, it is very much an attempt to regain elements of the unity of he contends were largely the central impetus of the mediaeval period. s

Thus *Dawn of the Post-Modern Era* is a somewhat transitional work for the development of postmodernism. Unlike Bell and Thompson's works, Trueblood's postmodernism is not derived from theological modernism but is instead an attempt to define a chronological period. As such, his postmodernism is a solution to the problems of he observes in modernity, not just a critique of the modernist an approach to Christianity. *Dawn of the Post-Modern Era* is not strictly chronological in the same sense that it is for Toynbee. Trueblood's postmodernism is a philosophical stance derived from what he thinks were the tenants of modernism (scientific explanation for phenomena, individualism). Consequently, Trueblood's work is one the first books to expand postmodernism into a broad philosophical stance; however, doing so required modernity to be defined fairly narrowly and unequivocally ended. It is worth noting that, excepting Toynbee, postmodern does not carry a

negative connotation. In fact, the author's dealing with the term see postmodernism as a way out theological binds or as a potentially fruitful new era.

Trueblood was not the last early period author to deal with the postmodernism as a religious issue. James Schall's 1962 "The Post-Modern World" is essentially a Catholic reaction to the appeal evangelical (specifically Pentecostals and less mainstream sects such as Jehovah Witnesses) Christianity held for certain groups of Americans.[37] Moreover, it is also a critique of faith in the efficacy of knowledge itself. In truth, the article is really about faith in truth and knowledge and how intellectual issues relate to religious faith. The author's "post-modernism" is not tied to the modernist debate that transpired some forty-years previous, but instead refers to an exhaustion of sorts the secular "man" must confront. The fact that the author never refers to fundamentalism or modernism as a theological movement suggests that the debate was both remote and, especially given the hierarchical nature of the Catholic Church, already decided.

Schall's conception of postmodernism, unlike the previous authors, is the loss of "order and meaning" and a resignation that this lack of fixed certainty is the "truth men must face."[38] Essentially, the postmodernist is a man (and presumably woman) without religious faith but equally disillusioned with the potential for man's intellect to transcend its own limitations: "Whereas Galileo, in a celebrated theory, held that man's mind exactly paralleled the mathematical mind of God, the post-modern Galileo was beginning to suspect that the scientist's mind paralleled only itself."[39] Thus, postmodernism is a pervasive sense that

---

[37] James V. Schall, "The Post-Modern World," *Commonweal*, 23 February 1962, 557-560. Commonweal is a publication run primarily by lay Catholics and as such deals primarily with issues concerning Catholics. Schall is a Priest and college professor currently teaching at Georgetown.
[38] *Ibid*., 557.
[39] *Ibid*., 558.

"truth" is unattainable. Baselines of experience and meaning are no longer guaranteed by God or science. This sort of rootlessness is common to realm of the well-educated and the intellectually curious.

The author, unsurprisingly given his religious orientation, argues that it is only those who have faith can maintain the unity of reality: "The unrecognized truth of the post-modern world is the paradox that on the religious believer still maintains the unity of scientific, historical and religious reality."[40] Schall argues that the evangelical sects bypass the paradoxes and difficulties of modern science by accepting the Bible as both literally true and capable of being understood by the common man. This view offers an easy, comfortable solution, but such a stance also tends to intellectually isolate these true believers from certain debates. They are insulated from the postmodern world of doubt but only through a faith Schall implies is deficient of reason.

Though Schall starts out breaking society down into the "highly educated and cultured" and the "practically uneducated…content with the intellectual metrecal provided by [mass media]," his distinction is really tripartite.[41] The author's categories suggest that there is under-educated underclass often attracted by the religious zeal of the evangelical church, a well educated class of agnostics/atheists, and a third group of generally well educated and religiously faithful. Certainly, the table he creates is not exhaustive by any stretch (he fails to deal with the non-believing, undereducated) though given the argument the article advances, the coarse categorization is adequate. Catholicism, specifically, provides a third way out by being loyal both to religious faith and to critical, rational analysis. A contemporary example of his critique of the evangelical's viewpoint is The Creation Museum. While the point of

---

[40] *Ibid*., 559.
[41] *Ibid*., 557.

this paper is not to analyze the religious or chronological sensibilities of Christian fundamentalists, it is worth noting that the museum is catering to a very specific audience that is hostile to intellectual ideas that are perceived as undermining faith. Schall's implication about intellectual disengagement from broader society is especially applicable given the nature of the Creation Museum.

It is worth noting, that part of Schall's argument about education is tied to religion and faith, and some of the undereducated are, in fact, holders of college degrees. The divide he sees, is more or less an issue of engagement with the intellectual world. Schall's postmodern condition is the concurrent problems of pervasive pessimism amongst intellectuals (or the educated) and an uncritical and child-like faith amongst the undereducated evangelicals. His postmodernism is both philosophical and chronological as well though, unlike Toynbee or Trueblood, the epochal quality is a secondary concern. Interestingly, he marks the end of modernity with Marx, Darwin, and Freud but not any particular event.[42] At the very least, Schall's privileging of intellectual/cultural issues above political/economic ones suggests something about his view of historical causation. More importantly, Schall's postmodernism is the first, especially amongst the religious authors, that treats postmodernism as a condition (and historical period) of intense skepticism and doubt.

Reason without faith leads to despair; conversely, faith without reason leads to intellectual isolation and, essentially, a closed community of fellow believers. That is not to say that Schall is particularly hostile towards Protestantism is general; only that he sees engagement with the world, at a broad level, to be a basic condition of Catholicism. Unlike

---

[42] *Ibid.*, 558.

the other theologically minded authors, Schall's postmodernism is the logical conclusion of a world unbound by the conventional anchors of religion and faith. Disillusionment is the terminus of a world where man is "in actual fact, the measure of all things."[43]

The uses of postmodern feature here are varied beyond the shared connection to the idea of epochs and historical periods. Moreover, these uses all reflect the symbiotic relationship between modernism and postmodernism. The postmodern period cannot exist with the modern era to provide its counter. Thus, even when the term designates a time period, its connections to modernism are always present.

Postmodernisms in the Periphery (1945-1966)

While many of the early permutations of postmodern had a fairly explicit religious basis, theologians of various stripes were not the only authors to use the word. Toynbee's limited use of the word has been previously discussed because of its applicability to a shift in usage displayed within the religious debates. However, examples of its usage occur in some other, unexpected places as well with the same range wide range of meanings and connotations. Given the fact that these examples are not connected by a thematic thread in the same way that the previous authors were, the remaining early examples will be dealt with primarily chronologically as opposed to thematically, with one exception.

Architecture is one of a few fields that not only had a modernist movement but also had a definite postmodernist movement as well. This topic will be covered in more detail in the next chapter; however, a quick overview of architectural modernism is worth developing here. The shortest and simplest definition of architectural modernism is the maxim "form

---

[43] *Ibid*., 558.

40

follows function." Simply, architectural modernism typically eschews adornment and façade

and instead embraces the unity between the building materials, the purpose of the building,

and the layout of the structure itself. In other words, it is a highly rationalized architectural

style.[44]

Before the publication of *Learning from Las Vegas* in 1972, very little was published

about postmodernism within the field. However, Joeseph Hudnut's (Dean of Harvard's

School of Design) article, "The Post-Modern House" addresses the term before it had

attained its more contemporary meaning as an architectural movement.[45] "The Post-Modern

House" is particularly interesting because of its 1945 publication date. This is significant for

two reasons. The first, this predates the common use of postmodern in the architectural field

by at two decades. Secondly, Hudnut's impetus to write the article was the end of the WWII

and the prospect on a large number of veterans coming home and looking to build new

houses. His fear about the increasing cohesion between materials and design and between

technique and from stemmed from the rise of prefabricated homes that would proliferate in

the post-war period. The article is, for all intents and purposes, a reaction against the

functionalism he saw in architecture and the post-war boom that would make the cohesion

between material and design even tighter.

Put another way, Hudnut was concerned that architecture had, in the attempts of

making itself a science, lost sight of its own design proclivities in its own enchantment with

modern technology and techniques.[46] Ironically, Hudnut's semi-nightmarish vision of the

"post-modern owner" as a person "[f]ree from all sentimentality or fantasy or caprice, his

---

[44] For a broad, though anti-modernist, overview of the topic see Malcolm Millais, *Exploding the Myths of Modern Architecture* (London: Francis Lincoln Limited, 2009), 28-52.
[45] Joeseph Hudnut, "The Post-Modern House," *Architectural Record*, May 1945, 70-75.
[46] *Ibid*., 75.

caprice, his visions, his tastes, his habits of thought shall be those most serviceable to a collective-industrial scheme of life" is basically the opposite of what postmodern architecture became.[47] In truth, it is a critique of the functionalism of modernist architecture itself. This article is notable because it anticipates a later rejection of modernist architecture's focus on efficiency and rote unity of design.[48] Postmodern architecture's tendency to mix design elements and indulge caprices is exactly the type of reaction that Hudnut feared would be washed away by the modern technological advances. Thus, in an interesting inversion, Hudnut's postmodernism is, really, modernism run to its absolute conclusion with the help of technological advances. The fact that architectural postmodernism became the opposite of the author's fears reveals the amebic flexibility of postmodernism. Moreover, it also indicates that there was some growing restlessness about modernism and its utilitarian nature.

Twenty years later, postmodernism in architecture had acquired at least a semblance of meaning similar to its contemporary one. An uncredited article from the *Architectural Forum* about a the opening of the Pre-Columbian wing (also known as the Philip Johnson Pavilion) of the Dumbarton Oaks museum in Washington D.C. indicates that postmodernism was beginning to develop, at least, a connotation of whimsy and a plurality of historical inspirations.[49] It should be noted that the article, though it does contain some text, is more focused on presenting images of the exhibits than talking about architecture or even the presentation of the items themselves. The building itself was actually inspired by a sixteenth-century Turkish architect, Mimar Sinan, and is more or less uniform in design, and in its own

---

[47] *Ibid*., 75.
[48] See Steven Connor, *Postmodernist Culture: An Introduction to Theories of the Contemporary* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989) 74.
[49] "Pre-Columbian Art in a Post-Modern Museum," *Architectural Forum*, March 1964, 106-111.

right the wing is not particularly postmodern.[50] However, this design of the wing is radically

different from the Federal-style home to which it was attached. Thus, the "post-modern"

wing is postmodern if it is taken as part of the house as a whole. It is worth noting as well

that the Pre-Columbian art that was to be stored in the wing contrasts with the Islamic

inspired circular galleries. In that sense too, the architecture clashes with the objects stored

within it. Given the structural symmetry of pairing "post" and "pre" together in the title, the

author probably utilized the pairing to some extent for that purpose. As the epigraphs quote

notes, the combination is interesting and jarring. In any case, the use of postmodern, thought

not explicitly articulated, does suggest a purposeful pairing of different styles from different

regions in a way that draws attention to their disparate nature. If nothing else, the

postmodernism implied by this article is almost completely antithetical to the postmodernism

of Hudnut was cautioning against. The building is not a monument to practical utility and

modern building materials; it is a purposefully idiosyncratic and stylistically mixed.

  While architecture's relationship with postmodernism has been relatively positive, the

same cannot be said of the social sciences. Well before Foucault became known in America,

some social scientists were wrestling with issues of objectivity and truth. David Easton's

"Shifting Images of Social Sciences and Values" deals explicitly with the both the social

sciences desire to mimic the hard sciences and the limitations of value-free inquiry.[51]

  Easton's use of the term "post-modern" is both fairly specific and qualified. In his

analysis of Western social sciences he uses the term, "for want of a more descriptive and

---

[50] "Philip Johnson Pavilion," Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, Last Modified October 22, 2010, http://www.doaks.org/museum/pco_collection/philip_johnson_pavilion.html
[51] David Easton, "Shifting Images of Social Science and Values," *The Antioch Review* 15 no. 1 (1955): 3-18.

generally accepted phrase."[52] Yet, the overall issues he is investigating are, in some regards, fairly similar to Trueblood and Toynbee. Easton argues that the attempt to divorce the social sciences from values has left them devoid of much of their potential value to society and susceptible to being co-opted by morally reprehensible movements (Nazis for instance). In several senses, Trueblood and Easton are dealing with the same sense of post-war shock that destabilized previous belief in Western humanism and scientific progress.[53] The author is interested in reasserting a place for non-scientific inquiry in a discipline striving for the mathematical rigidity of Newtonian Physics. Easton is pushing for a fusion of subjective and objective elements in a way that he hopes forces social scientists to move beyond the ineffectual mask objectivity.

Easton's postmodernism also contains a definite element of returning the return and acceleration that has been previously mentioned. In his opinion, pre-modern social science dealt explicitly and often fruitfully with issues of values and morals. The modern period, with its attempts to gain acceptance into the academy as a hard science, emulated them.[54] Problematically, as social science in general become more capable of aggregating knowledge about behavior, it became less adept at answering relevant questions precisely because of its own dedication to objectivity. In this sense, Easton's desire to return to the pre-modern social science's engagement to value/moral issues while maintaining the rigorous standards of data acquisition reflects the use of postmodern as both intimately tied to modernism while also an attempting to reconnect with a period when social science was willing to deal with values. Easton's view reflects both the direct correlation modernism and postmodernism share, and

---

[52] *Ibid*., 5.
[53] *Ibid*., 4.
[54] *Ibid*., 7.

how this relationship tends to be marked by an acceleration of some aspect (or aspects) of modernism and a desire to return to something pre-modern.

The final article within this early period is a short, unusual example of postmodernism being used as a chronological designator. "Education in the Post-Modern World" by Carl Rowan (published in 1964 in the *NEA Journal*) is a fairly straightforward appeal for the expansion of college education.[55] Given the journal's orientation towards higher education, arguing in favor of expanding is less than surprising. His argument is that in previous eras, starting with Thomas Jefferson's founding of the University of Virginia as an elite institution of higher-learning, college education was limited on the basis of both expense and because of a general concern that too much education would dilute the potential number of workers for industry and agriculture (slavery's role in any of these arrangements is never mentioned). "Up to a generation or so ago in the modern world, societies—as from the beginning of time—literally could not afford too many students. Today in the post-modern world, the one deficiency society cannot afford is the lack of these same students."[56] Essentially, Rowan's postmodernism is simply a way of indicating that the current national need for students is unprecedented in human history. The modern vocational world was where basic education was adequate, it was the world of the factory and apprenticed labor; the postmodern world is a decidedly white collar one. Education is no longer the exclusive right of the genius or the privileged; it is necessary for the wheels of commerce and business to keep running. It is, perhaps, telling that the proliferation of education represents this demarcation between the modern world and the "post-modern" one.

---

[55] Carl T. Rowan, "Education in the Post-Modern World," *NEA Journal*, February 1966, 19.
[56] *Ibid.*, 19.

Throughout the pre-history of postmodernism, the term itself displays a curious set of meanings. Its origins are, especially given contemporary debates and connotations, surprising. As has been noted throughout this chapter, postmodernism tends to be most well developed when a clear modernist antecedent exists. Thus, its origins within a theological debate make sense. Certainly, the idea of theological postmodernism is closely tied to Christian modernism; however, aspects these articulations of postmodern faith carry overtones of acceleration and retreat. Consequently, even in its earliest uses, postmodernism caries an interestingly supra-chronological quality even when it is not used in an epochal sense; it evokes both the past and the future, lost technique and prospective innovation.

The last overtly religious writer to deal with postmodernism, Trueblood, engaged the term not as an issue of religious modernism but as an issue of the end of a period of history. Nor was he the first to use the term to represent the end of one age and the uncertain beginnings of a new. Toynbee's short reference in *A Study of History* uses the term to mark the end of an era (and this was before the beginning of the WWII). After WWII, this sense of a world beyond modernity became widespread. Not all uses of the term, such as Toynbee's, were negative. Easton's proposal for more value-aware social sciences represents something of the hope that postmodernism represented for some. However, it is neither the religious nor the chronological uses of the term that will come to dominate the coming uses of the term. Architecture and especially literature will become the two fields most readily associated with postmodernism. However, as both the uncredited article from the *Architectural Review* and Levin's analysis of modernism reveal, even within these fields, the debate had yet to be fully articulated.

Conclusion

Of course, part of the question underpinning this chapter is why postmodernism failed to form a recognizable "movement" before the late 1960s. Certainly, its earliest uses within a theological debate provided a context from which the term could have formed into an accepted, if not particularly limited, term within theological debates. The fact that it did not suggests something about the fickle nature of terms and meaning. Namely, a large part of why the term did not at least become part of a specialized lexicon is because postmodernism was grafted onto a debate that had a conclusion of sorts. Theological modernism, for the most part, was accepted by main-line denominations. Postmodern faith, as proposed by Bell and Thompson, failed to impact the nature of the debates within these institutions and thus became footnotes. Put another way, these theological debates were too disciplinary and decided in a way that made postmodernism an unconvincing solution or counter-philosophy.

This chapter also tends to illustrate that the fields most readily associated with postmodernism are largely absent from these early debates. Literature only mentions postmodernism in before the mid-1960s. Sources dealing with architecture dealt with the concept of postmodernism infrequently and in different ways. Hudnut's conception of postmodernism actually turns out to be nearly the inverse of what the style actually came to represent. However, the uncredited *Architectural Forum* article hints at what postmodernism came to be associated with, namely the free usage of different architectural styles and a mosaic quality of design elements. The varied and meandering early history of postmodernism reveals that term is always a possibility within a modernist movement. That is to say, some conception of modernism is the necessary condition for postmodernism. Postmodernism's tendency towards questioning science and overarching meanings tends to

47

transcend the debates themselves. Thus, Lyotard and Bell both question science, though the thrust of the arguments are very different. The commonality of modernism's association with the rise and validity of science allows for these two very different critiques to exist under the same moniker. The reflexivity between modernism and postmodernism often prefigures the framework of the debate; thus, the differences between eras tend to be differences of *degree* not of *kind*.

However, a seminal article published in *The Atlantic* in 1967 in many ways will mark the beginning of the second phase of postmodernism's development. It is only when the term gains significant currency that it is able to establish itself in domains that lack a sense of modernism. After decades of near misses and surprising origins, postmodernism was about to take a definite turn towards public awareness and considerably controversy focusing especially on the discipline most readily associated with the term itself—literature.

CHAPTER THREE
The Coalescence: 1967-1975

"To call a Late Modernist a Post-Modernist is tantamount to calling a Protestant a Catholic because they both practice a Christian Religion… Such category mistakes lead to misreadings and this may be very fruitful and creative…but it is ultimately barren and destructive"
Charles Jenks, 1986.[1]

As the previous chapter's various versions of postmodernism indicated, this early history took place, by and large, outside of disciplines that have come to be typically associated with postmodernism. Postmodernism formed in unexpected intellectual areas but failed to embed itself into most of these fields in a permanent way. These early uses of "postmodern" never gained cultural/intellectual currency the way later iterations did. However, what is most notable is that even these early uses of the "postmodern" contained elements (skepticism about science, ambivalence towards progress) that mesh with contemporary meanings of term.

After several decades of false starts and unusual permutations, postmodernism began to establish itself as a definite (though still indefinable if taken as unified term) concept. Like its first uses in theological debates, its rise in the field of literature was both part of a larger intellectual context and importantly tied to the existing traditions of literary modernism. "Postmodernism" appeared in areas where a modernist movement did not already exist. This trend is particularly prevalent in the social sciences which, for various reasons, were undergoing a series of reassessments and epistemological crises. Postmodernism's use also, it

---

[1] Charles Jenks, *What Is Post-Modernism?* (London: Academy Editions, 1986). 38.

should be remembered, began to expand in the 1960s and into the 1970s. Unlike the fairly small number of examples of "postmodernism" during its "pre-history," the term (and its various offshoots) proliferated during this period. The term might have lacked a unified or clear meaning, but its use is no longer strictly novel innovation.

At this juncture, it is also worth noting the importance that the overall intellectual climate has on acceptance, rejection, or renegotiation of a term. The failure of theological postmodernism to become a more lasting concept was tied nature of the religious debates themselves. The idea of religious modernism was relatively new (though biblical criticism certainly has a much longer history than the early twentieth-century, the debates in mainstream churches was not) and still carried the possibility of reconfiguring religious debates and beliefs. Postmodernism's symbiotic connection with the modern largely tends to limit the potential for the its widespread acceptance when modernism still holds widespread sway. That is to say, theological modernism was still considered to be a viable entity, and it was a recent enough part of the debate that it could not easily be replaced by a theological stance largely derived from its own theories.

Postmodernism becomes a viable part of the debate when modernism (however it is defined) has shifted from interloper to insider: from radical critique to blasé orthodoxy. Though the idea or conception of the "modern(ist/ism/ity)" itself constitutes the necessary precondition for "postmodern(ism/ist/ity)," postmodernism becomes viable especially when modernism is established and therefore subject to critique itself. The inadequacy of modernism is the precursor to postmodernism. In fact, postmodernism could not replace modernism without losing its essential critical character. Postmodernism is defined and articulate reflexively to modernism. Thus, if a postmodernist movement or style can be said

50

to exist, a modernist movement either has to exist or has to be invented for the postmodernism to exist.

However, the prevailing sense that a movement/conception, in this case modernism (however defined), has run its course does not fully explain why a new conception/theory replaces the prevailing model. Thus, postmodernism's failure to become a part of the lexicon of theological debates in the 1910s and 1920s suggests both that the doctrinal conflicts were not suited for the idea to embed itself in the debates and that intellectual currents of the period were not fortuitous for a general acceptance of the word itself. Postmodernism's progression from more or less academic journal articles to mainstream consciousness was facilitated by the intellectual currents of the 1960s and 1970s. Though the 1960s are typically noted for a left-leaning radicalism, it is the ultimate failure of these movements that predicts the reaction against liberalism.

While it would be cliché to simply say that the 1960s were a time of radicalism and iconoclasms, the nature of the period is important to the general proliferation of the term itself. The intellectual climate in which that postmodernism gained traction as a culturally recognizable concept is an important aspect of its ultimate acceptance within certain academic and intellectual circles. Postmodernism's movement from obscurity to ubiquity arose within a set of cultural circumstances that both facilitated its relatively broad acceptance and shaped its ultimate formation. Put another way, modernism was essentially under attack after its most radical proponents failed to reshape society. The failure of the modernism's principles to lead to the utopian changes promised under its rational, progressive program lead to disillusionment and critique.

It was also, moreover, facilitated by fields in which it appeared during the period in question, most especially literature. Unlike the theological debates that were detailed in the previous chapter, postmodern literature "stuck." Of course, the academic side is specialized and often pedantic; however, on the whole, literature is broadly appealing and comprehensible to modestly educated individuals. Literature was the medium whereby postmodernism became a concept that could be widely discussed by non-specialists. Moreover, even some of the more specialized pieces on the subject tend to still be much more accessible than theological treatises.

Modernist Literature

While literature has a long and widely recognized modernist movement, defining it is not necessarily straightforward. That is to say, the overall impetus for the modernist literary movement was the rapid changes that Western civilizations went through between industrialization and the rapid changes occurring within society. Modern literature explored, most broadly, what it meant to live in the "modern" world. Unsurprisingly, the way in which this issue was handled by authors and schools associated with them are difficult to define without undermining the relative complexity of the recognized but unorganized movement. However, like the theological debates touched upon in the first chapter, defining literary modernism for the purposes of this paper can be fairly condensed. It is certainly not done in a way that suggests these debates are unimportant or the differences easily ignored, only that broad definitions will serve the specific purposes of this paper.

One of the inherent problems with defining modernism (regardless of the discipline or field in question) is demarking the actual period it encompasses. While this is to some extent

true of all periods, literary modernism is fairly difficult to pin down. Unlike the Romantic Period (1785-1830) which can be bracketed by fairly specific events, the modernist movement lacks such the same defining historical moments.[2] Yet, in spite of the fact that literary modernism cannot be said to begin with a specific historical moment, it does have a connection to a longer historical event. The technological/scientific advancement that the nineteenth-century witnessed and the general reordering of society that followed from those changes are centrally important to what literary modernism became. It could be argued that postmodernist authors are simply, especially if taken individually, radical modernists. Steven Connor noted that postmodernism "can be seen as the selective intensification of certain tendencies within modernism itself."[3] However, if taken as a group, they "represent a bridge between the endgame of formal innovation that compromised late modernism and the repudiation of narrative and generic boundaries that…comprise the heart of postmodernism."[4]

Essentially, literary modernists, in a variety of ways, deal with the general decay of traditional society and the new, technological ethos it was being replaced with. While that definition gives the period a wide range of decades from which to start, Malcolm Bradbury's choice to start in the 1890s is natural choice for several reasons. The decade saw the closing of the American frontier, the rise of industrial cities in the East and Midwest, and the publication of modernist classics like Henry James's *What Maisie Knew*.[5] However,

---

[2] For more details about the subject refer to "The Romantic Period," and the "The Victorian Age" in *The Norton Anthology of British Literature*, ed. Stephen Greenblatt, 7th ed., vol. 2 (New York: Norton, 2000), 1-21, 1043-1063.
[3] Connor, 109.
[4] "Breaking the Frame," *Postmodern American Fiction: A Norton Anthology*, ed. Paula Geyh, 1st ed. (New York: Norton, 1998). 1.
[5] Malcolm Bradbury, *The Modern American Novel*, 2nd ed. (New York, Viking, 1993), 1-7.

modernism is not, necessarily, a dead form today. Practitioners of this style still exist. That is

to say, though literary postmodernism is a reaction to and against modernism, it did not

replace what could still be defined as literary modernism.

To some extent, the definition of modernism that I will use is derived from the typical

traits of postmodernism as it tends to contrast with modernist literature. Naturally, certain

elements and trends overlap and frequently authors considered to be modernists display

postmodern traits and postmodernists conversely display modernist traits as well. As Ihab

Hassan notes in his influential work of literary criticism, *The Dismemberment of Orpheus*,

modernism challenged every artistic form and every assumed truth.[6] Thus, it is important to

consider modernism as an almost systematic reconsideration of expressive forms more so

than a particular form itself. To a large extent, both literary modernism and postmodernism

are, at the most basic level, largely concerned with the artistic form itself (this is also true of

art and to architecture to varying degrees).

Hassan, in an attempt to define and demark the differences between modernism and

postmodernism, developed a list of traits that define and separate the two approaches. I

would argue deriving a definition by comparison is appropriate and helpful because of the

inherent links between modernism and postmodernism and because this chapter is dealing

fairly explicitly with the nature of the interaction between them. Some of the most important

characteristics of literary modernism include specificity of form, design, artist as world

creating, work as a complete world of its own, depth, and a general allegiance to traditional

---

[6] Ihab Hassan, *The Dismemberment of Orpheus: Toward a Postmodern Literature* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), 9-10.

narrative structures.[7] Put another way, I think it is most useful to define and view literary modernism as a movement that especially emphasized the potential of an artistic vision to create its own world and was very prone to exploring the idiosyncrasies of point of view. Consequently, modernism includes authors that focus on extreme realism and accuracy of representation (Jack London and Stephen Crane) and others that focus on feeling and mood (T.S. Eliot). Authors as stylistic different as James Joyce (except perhaps for *Finnegan's Wake*) and Ernest Hemingway both are solidly modernist under this broad definition. Naturally, this is a fairly loose, but still useful because it provides a workable understanding of the basic underpinnings of the movement itself.

However, the previous descriptions do not fully deal with what is driving the modernist movement. Literary modernism is a broad range of responses to the vast economic, social, and technological changes that occurred and proliferated throughout the nineteenth-century into the twentieth. These responses have taken on a large variety of expressions and forms. James Joyce's dense stream of consciousness in *Ulysses* is an attempt to give an artistic impression of what the modern city is like. Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle* is an unequivocal attack on the nature of capitalism and the comodification of modern life and work. Though radically different from Joyce, both authors' are essentially dealing with the realities of modern society. Though Sinclair is overtly concerned with the coercion of capital and Joyce the isolation of modern urbanity; the issues they deal with are intimately connected.

---

[7] Ihab Hassan, *The Postmodern Turn: Essays in Postmodern Theory and Cultures* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1987). 91-92. It should be noted that the complete list of elements is fairly long and many of the examples are not useful for the purposes of this definition.

Postmodern Literature (1960-1973)

At least one author dealing with literary style and theory explored the issues and potential meanings of a postmodernist literary movement. Harry Levin's article, dating from 1960, anticipates but is not, much like the rest of the authors mentioned throughout the prehistory of the postmodernism, actually part of the later debates.[8] This article is better suited for discussion in this chapter because thematic, as opposed to strictly chronological, analysis is more useful given the nature of the subject matter itself. Literature might have had a surprisingly lack of early utilizations of postmodern, the field articulated, defined, and used it with remarkable alacrity.

Henry Lavin's article actually falls outside of the chronology of this chapter (published in 1960), but its connections to the subjects covered here make more sense than placing it within the previous chapter. It is worth noting that "What Was Modernism?" was published in the *Massachusetts Review* the work falls. Levin's article anticipates the end of literary modernism as opposed to predicting what postmodernism will be. Levin's analysis suggests that the modernist epoch in literature has been overtaken by a different (postmodernist) one. Certainly, his title "What Was Modernism?" carries a connotation of being completed by virtue of its use of "was." Levin's argument is a reaction against the commercialization of modernism (or at least what he defines as modernism) and the lack of genuine ingenuity that contemporary authors were displaying. The author's analysis of the postmodern turn is not a positive one: "[s]tupidity has decidedly not been the forte of the Modernist; they have left that virtue to their Post-Modern attackers, who can now write in

---

[8] Harry Levin, "What Was Modernism?," *The Massachusetts Review* 1 no. 4 (1960): 609-630.

defense of ignorance."[9] Levin's postmodernism is something fairly similar to Toynbee's use

of the term, both as a chronological signifier and as a way of referring period of paradox and

disunity. In fact, Levin specifically cites Toynbee as the source of the "Post-Modern."[10]

While the previous chapter reveals that the word is much older, the fact that Toynbee is cited

as its progenitor suggests a lot about what Levin thinks about the term. Levin's article,

though gloomy, is not portending the end of Western civilization, both authors' are

preoccupied with the idea of decay and collapse. Toynbee's concern is the macro-historical

level and Levin the literary one. Distilled down to its base, Levin is arguing that modernism,

for all its faults, made an honest attempt to wrestle with and artistically portray the nature of

modern life. He is arguing, implicitly, against the coming ironic and often absurd portrayal of

modern life. Modernists took seriously their attempts to articulate living in a modern society.

Levin's conception of postmodernism is primarily his perception that this shift

Levin's most interesting observation is that "[s]cience no longer underprops our

world view with rationalistic or positivistic reassurances. It has undergone of modernist

phase of its own, and seen its solid premises subverted by such concepts as relativity and

indeterminacy."[11] What is striking about the previous observation is the way modernism is

used. It would seem to make more sense that the author would chose to categorize the shift in

science as "Post-Modern" rather than modern. However, it is his view that literary

modernists (James Joyce, Franz Kafka, and Ezra Pound for example) have become the fodder

of imitation and proliferation. In some ways, his analysis prefigures the later rise of literary

postmodernism. The focus on criticism as literature and the process as art itself are traits of

---

[9] *Ibid*., 627.
[10] *Ibid*., 612.
[11] *Ibid*., 629.

literary (and artistic) postmodernism and to some extent are the qualities Levin criticizes. Arguably, "What Was Modernism" is really best understood as a precursor to the later debates and developments of literary postmodernism.

Levin's observation's about the increasing commercialization of art and literature also predicts some later elements of postmodern literature such as appeal to popular culture and the imitation previous forms of art and the proliferation of criticism as art. His idea of postmodernism is really more in line with Toynbee's usage as an epochal designator and carries a connotation of decay and, to borrow a phrase from John Barth's, exhaustion. Moreover, Levin's own analysis of modernism stresses its "awareness of chronology."[12] His "post-modernism" represents and ironic awareness of chronology and the end of the modernist movement; it carries an implicit argument of obsolescence. Levin's article certainly anticipates elements of the coming shift within literature. Some of the critiques he ascribes to postmodernism (in spite of the fact it at this point literary postmodernism was essentially unfounded or defined) turn out to be both accurate of the eventual turn the movement made (criticism as art and popular culture as art). Levin's article, though ultimately still somewhat relegated to the prehistoric-era of postmodernism. Even so, the symbiotic relationship between the modern and the postmodern and the Levin's awareness of modernism's susceptibility to criticism still display the issues discussed

John Barth's 1967 article "The Literature of Exhaustion" is a concise explication of the new novelistic turn; that is to say, Barth sees the new movement to be a shift away from an "exhausted" modern movement. The article is short and it is not particularly academic or esoteric which is notable. Barth's article is interesting not only for its content but also for

---

[12] *Ibid*., 621.

where it was published, *The Atlantic*. That is not to argue that *The Atlantic* is a particularly mainstream magazine, but it is certainly more widely accessible than an academic journal both in terms of content specialization and general access.

Why does the exhaustion of the existing literary forms matter? Why does the repetition matter? The obvious summation would be that the old forms are inadequate for the times. Hemmingway and Eliot, though masters in their own right, could not provide a pattern for those who must create the literature of the next epoch. Barth's conception of this limitation of modernism is most interestingly articulated in his analysis of Samuel Beckett and Jorge Luis Borges, "in an age of ultimacies and 'final solutions'—at least felt ultimacies, in everything from weaponry to theology, the celebrated dehumanization of society, and the history of the novel—their work in separate ways reflects and deals with ultimacy."[13] If the old modernist world of art imposed artistic limits, the new author has to probe these limits by means of self-conscious imitation and willful exploration of the frontier of both words and of silence. Modernism cannot meaningfully speak to human experience anymore. Though Barth focused on the idea that modernism is inadequate, his analysis also carries the implication that the human condition has also changed. Modernism is insufficient for the times.

Certainly, both his commentary and his place of publication suggest a broad sense of awareness that modernism as a literary/artistic movement was being challenged by an increasingly self-aware group of artists that focused on art that is increasingly both audience-less and artist-less.[14] Barth's reaction, though merely seven years removed from Levin, is hopeful about the potentiality of these new authors especially Samuel Beckett and Jorge Luis

---

[13] *Ibid*., 30.
[14] John Barth, "The Literature of Exhaustion," *The Atlantic*, August 1967, 29-34. 29-30.

Borges.[15] As the title suggests, his idea of the exhaustion of modern artistic representation and the limitation of forms carries important implications.

It is obviously only in retrospect that Barth's conception of the shift in literary from modernism to something else, something new, is prophetic. This article is one of the few pieces cited in this thesis that does not actually use the word postmodern (or any of its various offshoots). However, its inclusion is necessary because it points to the postmodern literature that is already (at the time of publication) well on its way. Unlike authors mentioned in the first chapter, Barth's work prefigures the rise of formal, postmodern criticism. To some extent, unlike his earlier counterparts, he has some agency in shaping the direction this movement takes. His inclusion is helpful because he bridges the gap between Levin and Hassan—the gap between the pessimistic old-guard and the rise of the avant-garde new critics.

Ihab Hassan's is a remarkably prolific author and theorist; one of the most significant postmodern theorists (if not the most important), much of his criticism set the groundwork for later discourse on the topic. Though Hassan's academic standing is both traditional (doctorate in English, tenured professorship at the University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee) his background does have one particularly interesting quality: he is an *outsider*. Hassan is Egyptian; he experienced the realities of living in a post-colonial society. That is to say, his approach to modernism inherently contains some element of the *other*.

Hassan's 1971 treatise *The Dismemberment of Orpheus* is probably his most important work because it represents the first formal book-length articulation of postmodern literature and how it differs from and connects to modernism. Though the analysis is deep,

---

[15] Barth does not use the word postmodern (or its various offshoots) in the article. However, he is analyzing what will become known as postmodernism.

Hassan privileges the importance of silence, a return to romantic sentiments, and a "nihilist play…toward the vanishing point."[16] He is influential in establishing certain categories that become hallmarks for what postmodern criticism and literature.

In 1971 he also published an article length work "POSTmodernISM;" unlike his book length endeavor, this utilizes a *Tristram Shandy*-esque arrangement that in many respects reinforces the several of the ideas/concepts he is advancing, especially indeterminacy; this makes a considerable amount of sense because he ultimately refuses to actually define either modernism or postmodernism in any meaningful way.[17] At first glance the relative lack of clarity might suggest at most a partially developed idea or a slightly uneven distillation of a particular theme in *The Dismemberment of Orpheus*. However, "POSTmodernISM" is arguably better understood as "art as criticism." He is playing with both the idea of formal criticism and the ideas of modernism and postmodernism in this article. Hassan is advancing a critical theory of literature and also a form of criticism that takes itself to be a worthy artistic endeavor in its own right. Hassan's work is as much about the author's he critiques as it is about the inventive quality of his writing in its own right.

Hassan's later work provides much more cohesive definition of postmodern literature.[18] However, even these earlier, less clearly defined pieces point towards a coalescence of literary approaches and ideas. From Lavin's mournful epitaph for the death of modernism, Barth's hopeful musings, and Hassan's almost joyous espousal, the arc of postmodernism's literary rise is quite rapid especially compared the various false starts that postmodernism takes in different fields. As the last chapter will show, the Hassan's hopes

---

[16] Hassan, *The Dismemberment of Orpheus*, 23
[17] Ihab Hassan, "POSTmodernISM," *New Literary History* 3 no. 1 (1971): 5-30.
[18] The list mentioned previously in this chapter is taken from a newer reprint of *The Dismemberment of Orpheus* (1971 for the original, 1983 for the reprint).

and expectations for postmodernism as the new literary form was, in his own view, misplaced. At this juncture, postmodernist literature is still two years away from its ultimate ascension into the academy. However, before detailing the events that propelled postmodernism into a movement, other threads of the story are left to weave.

Postmodernisms in the Social Sciences

The social sciences have a fair amount of connection to more contemporary postmodernist debates. Sociologists especially had an interesting dialogue about the nature of modern sociology and how it might take a postmodern turn of its own. David Easton's "Shifting Images of Social Science and Values" from chapter one is an early example of sociologists grappling with the epistemological limitations of apply rigid, hard science approaches to the field and the problematic divorce between the subjective and objective. As Immanuel Wallerstein noted "The real change was the demise of the cannon." [19]

The field itself had some fairly strong ties to the academic radicalism of the 1960s. C. Wright Mills influenced counter-culture groups such as Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) and influenced the Port Huron Statement.[20] Sociology departments also benefitted from increased enrolment that occurred in the 1950s and 1960s between the GI bill and the general enlargement of higher education. Put another way, sociology was both radicalized and popular during the late 1960s and early 1970s. Moreover, sociology also represents most clearly the problematic interchange between science and life.

---

[19] Immanuel Wallerstein, "The Culture of Sociology in Disarray," in Sociology in America, ed. Craig Calhoun (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 432-433.
[20] Craig Calhoun, "Sociology in America: An Introduction," in *Sociology in America*, ed. Craig Calhoun (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 36.

Though the articles that will be discussed later on were published at least 13 years after Easton's 1955 article, the basic issues they deal with are similar.[21] Not all of the authors embrace the idea of a postmodern shift in the field, but they are all deal with, in various ways, the difficulty of applying old methodology to the "(post)modern world." Like literature (and architecture), sociology was going through its own difficult adjustment. Unlike literature, abandoning sociology's foundational precepts required a much greater revision of goals. The sociologist is not as free as the artist to innovate without justification. In other words, this period marks the point at which the social sciences are forced to deal increasingly with the limitations of scientific approaches and an increased awareness of the problems of universalizing theories of human society.

Amitai Etzioni is, like Hassan, a long time and highly prolific academic author though he is a sociologist. Etzioni is also well known for his communitarian world view. That is to say, he is deeply concerned with the limits and problems of unfettered freedom and communal power. His 1968 article "Basic Human Needs, Alienation and Inauthenticity" analyzes the sociological pressures of modernism and posits that the "social epoch" of postmodernism that "seems to be emerging now."[22] The author's contention is that a correlation between modernism and alienation/inauthenticity exists and that postmodernism is a reaction to and against that trend. Etzioni contends that the postmodern age is arriving.[23] Unlike other authors, Etzioni is not arguing against the sociological methodology but contend that some needs are neither socially constructed nor biological; that is to say, innate but not

---

[21] Easton's article was published in 1955, Amitai Etzioni's 1968, Vytautas Kavolis's 1970, and John Ferreira's 1970.
[22] Amitai Etzioni, "Basic Human Needs, Alienation and Inauthenticity," *American Sociological Review* 33 no. 6 (1968): 870-885, 870.
[23] *Ibid*., 873.

physiological. He is arguing against "over-socialization" and for something organic in conception without being physiological.[24]

Put another way, the author is reacting to both a sociological trend and a social trend. Although much of his argument is particular to sociological practices, his interest in creating a holistic, less methodologically fragmented, and more intuitive analysis of the human condition meshes with the author's that will be discussed below and the earlier article by Easton. What is more notable is his conception of these issues is the idea of an emerging postmodern society. Though his use of postmodern is limited in both frequency and scope, Etzioni's analysis implies that social pressures have led to an alienation of people from society itself. Though his inclusion here is to illustrate tendencies within sociology and the social sciences, Etzioni's suggestions about alienation and social disjunction echo some of the ideas that Frederic Jameson suggested about the nature of postmodernism and its origins. While the author's use is tertiary, it is an interesting reflection on the epochal usage of postmodern in a historical sense. Etzioni proposes no postmodern turn, but does indicate a sociological awareness of its potential implications.

Vytautas Kavolis's article is slightly later, 1970, an unlike Amitai, deals with the implications of postmodernism as a direct concern as opposed to a tertiary one. Again, Kavolis is an outsider much like Hassan and Etzioni being a Lithuanian expatriate. "Post-Modern Man: Psychocultural Responses to Social Trends" defines postmodernism as "the tension between 'modernistic' and 'underground' tendencies" that exists in the mind of modern man (his term).[25] This postmodern individual is characterized by a polarized

---

[24] For instance, shelter, food, and security are human needs that are biological in foundation. Ideas like freedom, authenticity, and belonging are non-biological basic needs.

[25] Vytautas Kavolis, "Post-Modern Man: Psychocultural Responses to Social Trends," *Society for*

personality that is forced to deal with the organizing, rational impulses of the modernism and the antithetical, "underground," reaction against it.[26] Such a person is aware, at least subconsciously, of the constraining structures of modern society and the tendency of such structures to extract optimum production and efficiency at the cost of more traditional social relationships. Kavolis also notes that this postmodern move is more or less tied to the rejection of definite meaning in language.[27]

Kavolis's definition of the postmodern individual's character suggests, in a decidedly psychologically grounded way, what Jameson would later suggest about the materialistic bases of postmodernism. Namely, the postmodern individual is a product of totalized rationalization; he (or she) is the product of a more or less systemic program of rationalization. Postmodern persons are reacting to and against the totality of modernistic rationalization. That is to say, that this process has reached its logical conclusion. The rise of the postmodern counter is a sign of modernisms totalizing ascendancy.

Kavolis's work on postmodernism also goes beyond this first article. 1972's "An Alternative Postmodernity" also deals with the rise of the postmodern person and the ways in which that ties into culture. Unlike, the previous article, "An Alternative Postmodernity" deals specifically another author's work—Daniel Bell's *The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism*. Kavolis contends with Bell's seminal work primarily on the subject of capitalism undermining the traditional anti-rational (or at least market-indifferent) nature of culture

---

the Study of Social Problems 17 no. 4 (1970): 435-448. 435.
[26] *Ibid*., 445.
[27] See *Ibid.,* 437. Kavolis focuses on postmodern literature thought this tendency could fairly be applied to postmodernism more broadly.

itself.[28] That is to say, that Kavolis is unconvinced by Bell's strictly materialistic (or at least capitalistic) account of the nature of modern culture.

However, the more interesting aspect of the article, for my purposes at least, is the continued references and expansion upon his earlier work. Kavolis frequently refers back to his earlier "Post-Modern Man" article and the implications of underground and modernistic tendencies. Most notably, Kavolis notes that both the underground (or postmodern) and the modern "demand" each other as a foil: "[t]he postmodern man can be conceived of as the person who strongly experiences both modernistic and underground orientations within his own personality and concerns himself with articulating them to each other.[29] In other words, postmodernity is experienced as a reaction against the universality of modern capitalistic society with is demands of impersonal efficiency. Like Jameson, Kavolis sees this process as tied rather closely to the demands of the economic system. However, the sociologist sees the process as being a played out not at an economic level so much as an interpersonal and cultural one. More significantly, Kavolis also sees this process not as completed (or the result of a process of complete modernization) but as a still developing trend:

> My usage suggests that these phenomena- though until recently invisible to most American social scientists--have been developing as one of the two directions inherent in psychocultural modernization; that both are very much alive and still spreading; and that if there is a different future, it will be shaped by those who succeed in connecting those two directions to each other.[30]

The reaction to, and against, modernism, as Kavolis sees it is ongoing; the process is incomplete and the reaction against it is provisional and unceasing.

---

[28] Vytautas Kavolis, "An Alternative Postmodernity," *Journal of Aesthetic Education* 6 no. 1 (1972): 125-137. 126-127.
[29] *Ibid*., 132.
[30] *Ibid*., 134. Kavolis's critique of Daniel Bell's work equally applies to Frederick Jameson's later work *Postmoderism: Or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* though that work is two decades newer.

The final article in this section is John Ferreira's a book review of Behari L. Abbi and

Satish Saberwal's *Urgent Research in Social Anthropology*. Ferreira's focus is actually on

India's anthropological discipline which follows the focus of the book he reviews. Ferreira's

conception of postmodernism is an outgrowth of his hope that this new trend will allow India

to develop its own anthropological tradition independent of the received traditions that

represent a colonial legacy. In an interesting way, the past both provides a framework and a

prison of sorts. Anthropology's traditions are not so much invalid as they are inadequate;

much like J. M. Thompson conception of "post-modern" Catholicism, the form fails to

represent the experience adequately. Ferreira's hope that "[t]he post-modern… will be a

happy blend and transfiguration of certain elements from the pre-modern and the modern."[31]

Ferreira sees the future in positive terms, the utilization of old and new, in an intelligent and

thoughtful manner, could lead to "the age of integral man, etherealisation, of psychological

plentitude."[32] Like Etzioni, Ferreira sees both the need for a reevaluation of disciplinary

standards and the potential for a substantial shift within the field to take place. As has been

previously noted, his postmodernism is a definite blend of the future and the past, an

idealized hybrid taking the best elements of the past and blending them with the most

promising elements of the future.

This article (and the book it reviews) also underscores another important aspect of

postmodernism—the disappearance of traditional society within larger industrial/

industrializing societies. This is essentially an argument about modernization. That is not to

say that postmodernism in Ferreira's case or more generally is wholly focused on the

---

[31] John V Ferreira, "Post-Modern Era in Social Anthropology?," *Economic and Political Weekly* 5 no. 26 (1970): 1005-1009.
[32] *Ibid*., 1006.

disappearance of the old, and, in fact, more positive permutations of it is focus on the creation and synthesis of new and more fitting form. More specifically, his conception of a hybridized non-Western anthropological research topics and methods is an underlying focus on *change* itself: "[b]ut are not appearance and disappearance always connected together like the Siamese twins? And is it not true that which appears disappears and that which disappears makes possible that which appears?"[33]

Postmodern Architecture

Besides literature, architecture is the field most closely associated with postmodernism. As was covered in the introduction, architecture's postmodernism is, unsurprisingly tied to its long and varied modernist movement. The scope of this debate and various controversies can easily constitute a book in its own right. Consequently, this discussion is truncated. However, there are several important elements of modernism and postmodernism that should be articulated before the marquee work of this period is considered.

As was covered in Chapter One, modernist architecture has its origins in early Inter-War period especially in post-war Germany with the founding of the Bauhaus School in 1919.[34] Arguably, the movement has an older, less cohesive basis in the industrial revolution itself. The proliferation of building materials such as steel and high-strength glass radically altered the potential of what could be produced. Malcom Millais anti-modernist *Exploding the Myths of Modern Architecture* notes that the ties between science and technology

---

[33] *Ibid*., 1007.
[34] Connor, 67.

produced unprecedented change in between 1839 and 1913.[35] If nothing else, modern

architecture is a result of "linking…science to practice —technology."[36] That is to say, the

formal modernist movement, beginning just after the WWI, was an outgrowth of technical

and scientific prowess and advancement in design and building materials.

Modern architecture is based on the belief that architecture, freed from the dead hand

of history, could be perfect or at least strive towards it. Modernist architecture self-

consciously breaks from the past. It is an interesting expression of faith in science and

technology in a period that is problematic for such faith on at least two different levels. The

first being that WWI was a modern war made possible by technological advancements that

increased the capacity for war to be more destructive. Instead of leading to a reaction against

modernity, it led to an acceleration of it. It is worth noting that the 1920s also witnessed the

rise of positive philosophy (though it certainly has older roots) and most especially Karl

Popper's logical positivism.[37] Popper's ahistorical philosophical stance on science and

progress is very much in line with the tendencies of architectural modernism.

The second level is the scientific level itself. Namely, the hard mathematical precision

of Newton's *Principa* was being challenged by theories of relativity. Freud's work on the

interpretation of dreams also eroded some faith in the rationality of human behavior on a

fundamental level. All that is to say that modernist architecture was born, partially, at a time

when several of its scientific planks were being challenged. However, the horror of the WWI

(as is true of WWII) renewed and reinforced the faith that many people had in science to

overcome the irrationality of conflict and war. Cracks existed even as the armor of

---

[35] Malcolm Millais, *Exploding the Myths of Modern Architecture* (London: Frances Lincoln Limted, 2009) 17.
[36] *Ibid*., 17.
[37] Joyce Appleby, Lynn Hunt, and Margaret Jacob, *Telling the Truth about History* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1994). 166-168.

modernism was forged, figuratively and literally, in the kilns and crucibles of post-war Europe and America. This reaction against irrationalism, and its embrace in the fascist regimes of Italy and Germany, was not limited to architecture. Arguably, modernism's ubiquity was strengthened by WWI; the carnage of "modern" warfare paradoxically led to a belief that modernity itself held the solution to avoiding its reoccurrence.

The most cogent way to articulate the baseline theoretical differences between modernism and postmodernism is to consider the buildings themselves as historical reflections. While this approach sounds unnecessarily abstract, especially since architecture is decidedly concrete and tangible, this conception is particularly telling. Both modernism and postmodernism (architecturally speaking) are historically aware if not preoccupied movements. Modernism's focus on unity of purpose/form, rationalism, and breaking with the past all combine to form a program that equates rationalism with the potential of perfection.

Conversely, postmodern architecture, with its eclectic and often whimsical combination of varied design elements and periods, is drawing attention to the present while it evokes certain elements of the past in an ironic manner. Modernism tries to break with history; postmodernism engages with history even as it focuses very much on the immediacy of the mosaic. However, this return of history comes with a price. Modern architecture's break with the past was predicated on rationalism inherently moving forward. Postmodernism's multivalence reintroduces history but in an especially problematic way.[38]

At a higher level, modern architecture's unity between structural form, building material, and design are *utopian* even as the buildings themselves are symbols of corporate or

---

[38] Connor, 69-70.

governmental power.[39] Architecture, to get built at least, is forced to deal directly with those very entities which are very often anti-utopian. Conversely, the pursuit of rational perfection, which tends to be the hallmark of modernism at the macro-level, is alienation and isolation.[40] Put another way, rational, mathematically grounded architecture produces, with some exceptions, an efficient box made of steel, concrete, and glass. This rationalism, tied to the self-conscious rejection of history (though not its own place in history), created a backlash against modern architecture that is arguably best encapsulated by a single work focusing on a city associated with any and everything except rationalism.

Learning from Las Vegas

There is one specific text that is unequivocally important within the development of architectural postmodernism—*Learning from Las Vegas*. Robert Venturi, Denise Scott Brown, and Steven Izenour's 1970 collaborative study of Las Vegas's commercial structure is a classic work of architectural analysis. *Learning from Las Vegas* is a reaction against the modern architecture. Las Vegas is the antithesis of modern architecture's functionalism but it is also an attempt to take seriously the narrative of unplanned, irrational development. Modernism's rational planning tells a progressive story; Las Vegas's unplanned development is tells a story of the market, of irrational capitalistic expansion.

Learning from Las Vegas is an attempt to rehabilitate vernacular architecture and diminish the perceived differences between the high and low. The authors' view of modernist architecture can be summed up in a quote from the first page of the book: "orthodox Modern architecture is progressive, if not revolutionary, utopian, and puristic; it is dissatisfied with

---

[39] *Ibid*., 69.
[40] Millais, 18.

71

existing conditions. Modern architecture has been anything but permissive: Architects have preferred to change the existing environment rather than enhance what is there."[41] *Leaning from Las Vegas* is an attempt to rehabilitate the commercial (and therefore non-artistic) architectural cityscapes.

This tendency is similar but still distinct from postmodernism's leveling proclivities. Brown, Venturi, and Izenour are attempting to provide a humanistic basis of architecture and to some extent strip away the pretensions of modernisms singularity of design, material, and intended purpose. The authors do not attempt to abolish distinctions between the two extremes *per say*, but their attempts to provide a theoretical and architecturally humanistic basis. While it is notable that they do not advocate a distinct postmodernist stance, their critiques of modernism and defense of Las Vegas's unabashedly over-the-top, commercially driven architecture points the way towards the leveling tendencies of postmodern architecture. In a very definite way, the attempt to rehabilitate commercial/ vernacular architecture of Las Vegas is similar to the impetus that drove postmodernism to value popular culture as much if not more than "high" culture. Problematizing previously accepted standards necessarily questioned the commonly held distinctions between art and commerce, between culture and advertising.

However, there is another, theoretical quality to *Learning from Las Vegas* that is especially important as well: the authors' suggestion that architecture be considered as a form of communication.[42] *Learning from Las Vegas* learned from the city that architecture is, in its varied and sometimes contradictory ways that billboards and casinos are communicating to

---

[41] Robert Venturi, Denise Scott Brown, and Steven Izenour, *Learning from Las Vegas* (Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 1972), 0. The first page of text is not numbered; consequently, 0 is the first page of non-Roman numeral text.

[42] *Ibid*., 1-3.

the observer. It is only in a place bereft of architectural pretense that these dialogues can be interpreted and analyzed: "Las Vegas was built in a day, or rather, the Strip was developed in a virgin desert in a short time. It was not superimposed on an older pattern as was the pilgrim's Rome of the Counter-Reformation and the commercial strips of eastern cities, and it is therefore easier to study."[43]

In other words, because of its lack of architectural history, Las Vegas represents an ideal location to study the semiotics of buildings and signs; their signs all hail from the same set of cultural, commercial, and historical meanings even if the messages themselves are varied. In other words, Las Vegas has a common dialect even if the various parts are often incompatible. As Connor notes, "The unity of the Las Vegas Strip is not fixed and static, but emerges in process."[44]

As was noted previously, *Learning from Las Vegas* was not written as a self-professed manifesto for postmodern architecture. However, its approach to the linguistic quality of architecture and its celebration of disunity, irrationality, and a reintroduction of the human element all point very strongly towards the postmodern turn in architecture. Modern architecture is a metanarrative of progress and formal perfection. Postmodernism is a rejection of this unity, but it is not a rejection of narratives themselves. It is just a considerably more complicated story.

The Rapture

The previous chapter, and this one to this point, has shown the postmodernism has an exceptionally varied historical development. Given the focus on this lack of singular focus, it

---

[43] *Ibid*., 14.
[44] Connor, 73.

might seem somewhat counterintuitive to claim that postmodernism (in a macro-level sense)

has an actual moment of coalescence. However, 1972-1974 qualify as the period that

postmodernism became something approaching a movement. Given the rather varied and

provisional nature of postmodernism, it is not surprising that there should be several

moments of birth. It is through these individual moments of realization, be they academic,

social, political, or cultural that postmodernism became a recognized (albeit a remarkably

problematic) form of discourse. It should be noted that modernism is not a dead form by any

means. Modernist authors still write, architects still practice, and philosophers who believe in

the potential for human progress still philosophize. That does not mean that these moments

marked the end of the modernist phase (if one can even be said to exist). Thus, the goal of

these next few pages is to provide a sketch of the various moments that helped to formulate a

conscious acknowledgement of postmodernism.

Philosophy/Culture/Language/Literature

As the introduction pointed out, postmodern philosophy is problematic both because

of the range of thinkers associated with the term and the lack of a definable modernist

movement to serve as its foil. Those issues notwithstanding, the publication of *boundary 2* in

1972 by SUNY Binghamton's Department of English marks a distinct moment of academic

acceptance and provides an element of philosophical engagement that is distinct but related

to its literary basis. The first issue of the journal describes itself:

> *boundary 2* is an international journal of postmodern literature published in the fall,
> winter and spring by the Department of English, State University of New York at
> Binghamton.[45]

---

[45] "Front Matter," *boundary 2* 1, no. 1 (1972): i-vii. iii.

Though the description above privileges the literary aspect, the journal, even in its first issue, published articles of a theoretical and philosophical basis as opposed to a linguistic or literary one. [46]

In fact, the very first article is "Michel Foucault as an Intellectual Imagination" by Edward Said.[47] This article focuses on the seminal author's work as interplay between history and philosophy. This article also reveals Foucault's intellectual significance early in his American reception. In any case, while this has its literary qualities, this article is emblematic of the sort of varied work the journal has carried since its inception in 1972. The linguistic/ literary qualities it displays are very frequently the central focus of the "postmodernism" itself. However, it is this very multiplicity that makes the *boundary 2* a useful and telling part of postmodernism's paradigm(s).

That is to say, *boundary 2* is an appropriately eclectic journal given its postmodern orientation. It is worth noting not only because of its early date, but also because of its long term viability. The journal not only managed to survive but has transformed from a labor of love (and considerable individual effort) to a well respected and unequivocally legitimate journal published by Duke University. Thus, this publication mirrors the course of academic postmodernism from interloper (or at least outsider) to legitimated (or at least tolerated) within the academy that it was originally ambivalent if not adversarial towards. That is to say, the journal mirrors the postmodern experience itself; starting as a fundamental critique

---

[46] See Duke University Press, *"boundary 2,"* Duke University Press, http://boundary2.dukejournals.org/ (accessed June 12, 2011). The journal is now published and run by Duke University Press and has been since volume 17 number 1 (1990). The current journal description is:

> Extending beyond the postmodern, *boundary 2*, an international journal of literature and culture, approaches problems in these areas from a number of politically, historically, and theoretically informed perspectives. *boundary 2* remains committed to understanding the present and approaching the study of national and international culture and politics through literature and the human sciences."

[47] Edward Said, "Michel Foucault as an Intellectual Imagination," *boundary 2* 1, no. 1 (1972): 1-36.

of the basis of Western rationalism and faith in human progress, postmodernism has become

an accepted, commercially and academically viable. That is not to say that *boundary 2* is

illegitimate or otherwise academically non-viable. However, shifting from an essentially "do-

it-yourself" publication to an entirely (academically) mainstream journal necessarily

diminishes it potential for critique because of its inherent connection to the academy itself.

boundary 2 is an excellent illustration of the shift from radical critique to tolerated (or

even embraced) form. Put another way, postmodernism (at least within the academy) had its

potentially subversive qualities subverted by an apt cooption of its critique into mainstream

sources. That is not to say that substantial and meaningful critique cannot come from within

the auspicious of the system/institution it seeks to critique, only that postmodernisms radical

examination of Western philosophical thought was, in many ways, tied to its existence

outside the academy itself.

Another journal figures heavily into the crystallization of postmodernism as well. In

this instance it is an established journal's recognition of postmodernism that reveals an

instance of acceptance or at least acknowledgement. The *Journal of Modern Literature*

(JML) published a special edition in July of 1974 that highlighted the new literary style.

Evocatively titled "From Modernism to Post-Modernism," JML's focus on postmodern

literature indicates an overt recognition of the new form.[48] Unlike *boundary 2*, JLM's was

not formed as a "postmodern" journal. In fact, JLM's status as a mainstream journal indicates

both the proliferation and crystallization of postmodern literature and points the way towards

validation within higher education.

---

[48] See "From Modernism to Post-Modernism," *Journal of Modern Literature* 3 no. 5 (1974).

The special edition covers broadly both analysis of postmodern works and how they challenge/build upon modernism. However, one article in particular is especially interesting because it uses Harry Levin's "What Was Modernism?" as part of its analytical basis. Maurice Beebe's "What Modernism Was" takes the modernist movement (in literature at least) to have effectively ended.[49] While the author's proclamation might have been overhasty, his analysis of what how the question "what was modernism?" can be answered reveals both the difficulty of defining modernism and the difficulty of identifying the causations that lead to postmodernism. Namely, Beebe attempts to balance literature as a reflection of society and as a reflection of artistic inspiration. In other words, modernism (as is true of postmodernism) was influential because it reflected societal tensions and concerns; modernism and postmodernism are also tied to artists themselves.[50] The author both reflects these tensions and shapes awareness to them. On the broadest level, Beebe's contention indicates that the end of modernism and the rise of postmodernism are indicative of both structural changes within society, politics, and the economy and the result of authorial (or artistic more generally speaking) changes that are connected to this shift in various ways but often through the idiosyncrasies of the authors themselves. Thus, Beebe is arguing for a middle ground between social factors and individual artistic interpretation.

As this chapter has endeavored to show, postmodernism shifted from peripheral interloper to a legitimate challenger to modernisms cultural hegemony. Postmodernism did not fully replace modernism and in instances where it largely has, the postmodern is also tied and connected to the modern by its own accelerating tendencies and oppositional formulations. Like modernism, postmodernism's status (in various fields) shifted rather

---

[49] Maurice Beebe, "What Modernism Was," *Journal of Modern Literature* 3 no. 5 (1974): 1065-1084. 1065.
[50] *Ibid*., 1068.

quickly from one of anti-establishment opposition, to being begrudgingly accepted, to finally

being institutionalized and marketed. In an appropriate mimicry, postmodernism's path has

mirrored that modernism; from radical outsider to accepted member.

CONCLUSION
Orthodoxies and Excess

"Postmodernism has always considered endings provisional, and has a taste for changing them. It seems very reasonable that I should apply the same principle to postmodernism itself."
Malcolm Bradbury, 1993.[1]

As the last chapter showed, the early 1970s saw postmodernism became a movement in its own right. That is not to say that it was in any sense a cohesive one. Unities aside, postmodernism had, if nothing else, gone from its varied early uses to meaning(s) to more or less current meanings and connotations of the word. That is not to suggest in any way that postmodernism's meanings have been static. Becoming culturally and intellectually relevant (or at least recognizable), postmodernism's meaning became more fixed because of its own visibility. The inherent and inescapable connection with modernist/ity . Coalescence itself arguably created a situation where postmodernism's extreme flexibility was curtailed by being forced to deal with a common set of referents. In 1972-4 postmodernism did not became "set" but its range of possible meanings were certainly restricted. Thus, after the mid 1970s, postmodernism was connected with a general rejection of Enlightenment ideals, skepticism towards human progress, and skepticism if not outright rejection of non-conditional non-relative knowledge.

Jameson's account offers a provocative version of the material changes that precipitated the end of modernism. As was covered in the Introduction, Jameson's analysis of postmodernism is a reaction to and against the complete modernization of society (in the

---

[1] Malcolm Bradbury, *The Modern American Novel*, 2nd ed. (New York, Viking, 1993). vii.

West at least). Modernism, from his materialist perspective, is the persistence of the pre-

modern alongside the modern (an aircraft factory next to a field still plowed by horse-drawn

implements).[2] Postmodernism is, from this perspective, the loss of historical referent to the

past and thus profoundly historically decentered. Jameson's Marxist influenced interpretation

of postmodernity has a year of coalescence:

> Meanwhile, it is my sense that both levels in question, infrastructure and
>
> superstructures— the economic system and the cultural "structure of feeling"—
>
> somehow crystallized in the great shock of the crisis of 1973 (the oil crisis, the end of
>
> the international gold standard, for all intents and purposes the end of the great wave
>
> of "wars of national liberation" and the beginning of the end of traditional
>
> communism).[3]

Jameson sees 1973 as the year in which the West (and especially the United States) became

aware of a radically changing world order. Unlike the previous examples dealing with more

ephemeral cultural issues, Jameson's focus on the economic/political issues is much more

tangible and definable. While it is not as exact as Charles Jencks proclamation that modern

architecture ended on March 16, 1972 with the implosion of the Pruitt Igoe housing-projects

in St. Louis, Jameson provides a year of demarcation between the old moderns and the new

postmoderns.[4]

Though its legitimacy was certainly not without its doubters, by 1975 postmodernism

possessed an undeniable cultural presence. In most cases, debates over postmodernism's

various offshoots are anything but decided. In some cases, early proponents of

---

[2] Fredric Jameson, *Postmodernism, or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*, 2nd ed. (Durham, NC:Duke University Press, 1991). 311.
[3] *Ibid*., xxi.
[4] See Millais, 51 for Jencks and the Pruitt Igoe complex.

postmodernism have become critics. As has been said repeatedly throughout this thesis, postmodernism is both an acceleration of modernism and an attempt to return to something previous. It is also, at its core, an example of the critique (especially the case of academia) co-opting its opponent. If postmodernism is a reaction to and against modernism, it too then has followed the same trajectory as its forbearer from that of critique to institutionalized acceptance. Modernism lost its power, its potential for reordering when it became a feature if not function of traditional establishments— especially in art, literature, and architecture. Postmodernism's ability to gain traction was partially a result of modernism's unavoidable shift from new and avant garde to blasé and banal. As was noted in the second chapter, postmodernism requires a modernist movement (even if it is cobbled together ad hoc) and it requires this modernism to be vulnerable to significant sustained critique before it can emerge. Eldred C. Vanderlaan noted that postmodernism's pairing of modern and post was novel in its own right; however, the pairing had to offer a meaningful critique of modernism as well.

One way modernism can be defined as the division of art (or architecture, literature, theatre, ect.) between the high and the low (or vernacular). Postmodernism tends to reject such categories, all artistic and architectural products are designed for mass consumption. Jameson's materialistic view of postmodernism suggests that the cultural products postmodernism has produced are more substantially tied to rationalizing forces than even modernism. Postmodern products are meant to be consumed and reproduced.

Postmodernism is too, a reaction to geo-political and economic issues. The fall of "classic" communism, perhaps the ultimate example of the totalizing utopian hopes of the modernist project, is a poignant example of this world shift. Postmodernism, with its

81

profound skepticism of narratives of liberation has led to a general embrace of the market (even if this consent is tacit). Leftist (especially Marxist inspired) critiques of postmodernism (especially Terry Eagleton and to a lesser extent Jurgen Habermas) note that this postmodernism's rejection of "grand narratives," especially those of progress and liberation, tend to limit postmodernism to criticism as opposed to organized action.

The utopian undertones of modernism were lost in a post-colonial, globalized world. However, in my view, postmodernism is not definable in strictly material terms. As I see it, the coalescence of postmodernism in the 1970s is the result of several issues. The "crisis of modernism" was the result of structural changes and geopolitical realignment, and it was a reaction to the fact that modernism in all its forms was not perceived as being able to deal with and articulate responses to these changes. This "crisis" was exemplified by modernism's anterior cultural position; modernism was decidedly institutionalize, mainstream, and respectable. Modernism was vulnerable because it was part of the "system." Postmodernism's inherent critique and acceleration of modernism took hold when modernism became vulnerable due to its own success. Modernism's failure could best be critiqued only when postmodernism

Postmodernism is always a possibility of modernism. The nature of its symbiotic and adversarial relationship made postmodernism an especially intriguing critique of modernism. The failure of early postmodernism is tied fairly closely to the age and vitality of modernist movements themselves. Thus, modernism's institutionalization coupled with significant technological, economic, and political changes created a climate receptive to postmodernism's challenges to modernism. Even the earliest examples of postmodernism contained elements that have become hallmarks of the term's meaning such as skepticism

towards science, relativism towards truth, and the fragmentation of identity. Ultimately, postmodernism's development, for all its twists and turns, shows a remarkable degree of consistency given its almost orbital relationship to modernism. By stripping away the contentions, jargon dominated, and value laden debates; the symbiotic and oppositional relationship of postmodernism to modernism reveals that the perimeters of the debate are set by modernism. Yet, the inherent possibility of postmodernism too changes the possibilities of modernism; the affect goes in both directions.

PRIMARY BIBLIOGRAPHY

Barth, John. "The Literature of Exhaustion." *Atlantic*, August 1967, 29-34.

Beebe, Maurice. "What Modernism Was," *Journal of Modern Literature* 3, no. 5 (1974): 1065-1084.

Bell, Bernard I. *Postmodernism and Other Essays*. Milwaukee: Morehouse Publishing, 1926.

Bell, Daniel. *The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism*. New York: Basic Books, 1976.

Eagleton, Terry. *The Illusion of Postmodernism*. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1996.

Easton, David. "Shifting Images of Social Science and Values." *The Antioch Review* 15, no. 1 (1955): 3-18.

Etzioni, Amitai. "Basic Human Needs, Alienation and Inauthenticity." *American Sociological Review* 33, no. 6 (1968): 870-885.

Ferreira, John V. "Post-Modern Era in Social Anthropology?" *Economic and Political Weekly* 5, no. 26 (1970): 1005-1009.

"Front Matter." *boundary 2*. 1, no. 1 (1972): *i-vii*.

Habermas, Jurgen. "Modernity—An Incomplete Project." Translated by Seyla Ben-Habib. *New German Critique* 22 (1980): 3-14.

—. *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity: 12 Lectures*. Translated by Fredrick Lawrence. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1987.

Hassan, Ihab. *The Dismemberment of Orpheus: Toward a Postmodern Literature*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1971.

—. *The Postmodern Turn: Essays in Postmodern Theory and Cultures*. Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press, 1987.

—, "POSTmodernISM," *New Literary History* 3, no. 1 (1971): 5-30.

Hudnut, Joseph. "The Post-Modern House." *Architectural Record*, May 1945, 70-75.

Jameson, Fredric. *Postmodernism, or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*. 2nd ed. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1991.

Jenks, Charles. *What Is Post-Modernism?* London: Academy Editions, 1986.

Kavolis, Vytautas. "An Alternative Postmodernity." *Journal of Aesthetic Education* 6, no. 1 (1972): 125-137.

—. "Post-Modern Man: Psychocultural Responses to Social Trends." *Society for the Study of Social Problems* 17, no. 4 (1970): 435-448.

Levin, Harry. "What Was Modernism?" *The Massachusetts Review* 1, no. 4 (1960): 609-630.

Lyotard, Jean-Francios. *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*. Translated by Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984.

—. *Postmodernism Explained*. Translated by Julian Pefanis and Morgan Thomas. University of Minnesota Press, 1992.

Millais, Malcolm. *Exploding the Myths of Modern Architecture*. London: Francis Lincoln Limited, 2009.

"From Modernism to Post-Modernism," *Journal of Modern Literature* 3, no. 5 (1974).

"Philip Johnson Pavilion." Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, Last Modified October 22, 2010. http://www.doaks.org/museum/pco_collection/philip_johnson_ pavilion.html

"Pre-Columbian Art in a Post-Modern Museum." *Architectural Forum*, March 1964, 106-111.

Rosenau, Pauline. *Post-Modernism and the Social Sciences*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992.

Rowan, Carl T. "Education in the Post-Modern World." *NEA Journal*, February 1966, 19-22.

Said, Edward. "Michel Foucault as an Intellectual Imagination." *Boundary 2* 1, no. 1 (1972): 1-36.

Schall, James V. "The Post-Modern World." *Commonweal*, February 23, 1962, 557-560.

Thompson, J.M. "Post-Modernism." *The Hibbert Journal* 12, no. 4 (1914): 733-745.

Tieger, Helene. "History of Bard." Bard College accessed April 29, 2011. http://www.bard.edu/about/history/.

Touraine, Alain. *Critique of Modernity*. Translated by David Macey. Cambridge, Blackwell, 1995.

Toynbee, Arnold J. *The Disintegrations of Civilizations*. Volume 5 of *A Study of History*. London: Oxford University Press, 1939.

"Trueblood, Elwyn Judson," *Who's Who in the South and Southwest* 6th ed. Chicago: Marquis Who's Who, 1959. 828.

Trueblood, Elwyn J. *The Dawn of the Post-Modern Era: Dimensions of Human Life in the Last Half of the Twentieth Century*. New York: Philosophical Library, 1954.

Vanderlaan, Eldred C. "The Modernist Controversy Once More." *The Journal of Religion* 6, no. 6 (1926), 629-633.

Venturi, Robert, Denise Scott Brown, and Steven Izenour. *Learning from Las Vegas*. Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 1972.

SECONDARY BIBLIOGRAPHY

Appleby, Joyce, Lynn Hunt, and Margaret Jacob. *Telling the Truth about History*. New York: Norton, 1994.

Bradbury, Malcolm. *The Modern American Novel*. New York, Viking, 1993.

"Breaking the Frame" In *Postmodern American Fiction: A Norton Anthology*, edited by Paula Geyh. New York: Norton, 1998.

Calhoun, Craig. "Sociology in America: An Introduction." In *Sociology in America*, edited by Craig Calhoun. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007.

Connor, Steven. *Postmodernist Culture: An Introduction to Theories of the Contemporary*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989.

Green, Garrett. "Modernity." In *The Blackwell Companion to Modern Theology*, edited by Gareth Jones. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2004

Jones, Gareth. "Introduction." In *The Blackwell Companion to Modern Theology*, edited by Gareth Jones. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2004.

"The Romantic Period." In *The Norton Anthology of British Literature*, edited by Stephen Greenblatt, 1-21. New York: Norton, 2000.

"The Victorian Age." In *The Norton Anthology of British Literature*, edited by Stephen Greenblatt, 1043-1063. New York: Norton, 2000.

Wallerstein, Immanuel. "The Culture of Sociology in Disarray." In Sociology in America, edited by Craig Calhoun. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007.

VITA

Daniel Adam Michalak was born in Oberlin, Ohio on October 1, 1984. He grew up on a family farm and attended primary and secondary school in Sullivan, Ohio. Daniel graduated from Black River High School in June of 2003. In the fall of 2003 he entered Marietta College and pursued a degree in the Bachelor of Arts in History and English. In 2007 he graduated with college honors. In the fall 2008, he accepted a teaching assistantship position in the history department at Appalachian State University and pursued a Master of Arts Degree in history. His MA was awarded in August of 2011.

Mr. Michalak is a member of Phi Alpha Theta and Sigma Tau Delta. He served as secretary of the Appalachian State University Graduate History Association and as treasurer of the Omicron-Phi chapter of Phi Alpha Theta in fall of 2010 and spring of 2011. His home address is 45211 Stewart Road, Sullivan, Ohio 44880. His parents are Mr. Robert Michalak of North Olmstead, Ohio and Mrs. Debra Hintz Michalak of Huntington, Ohio.